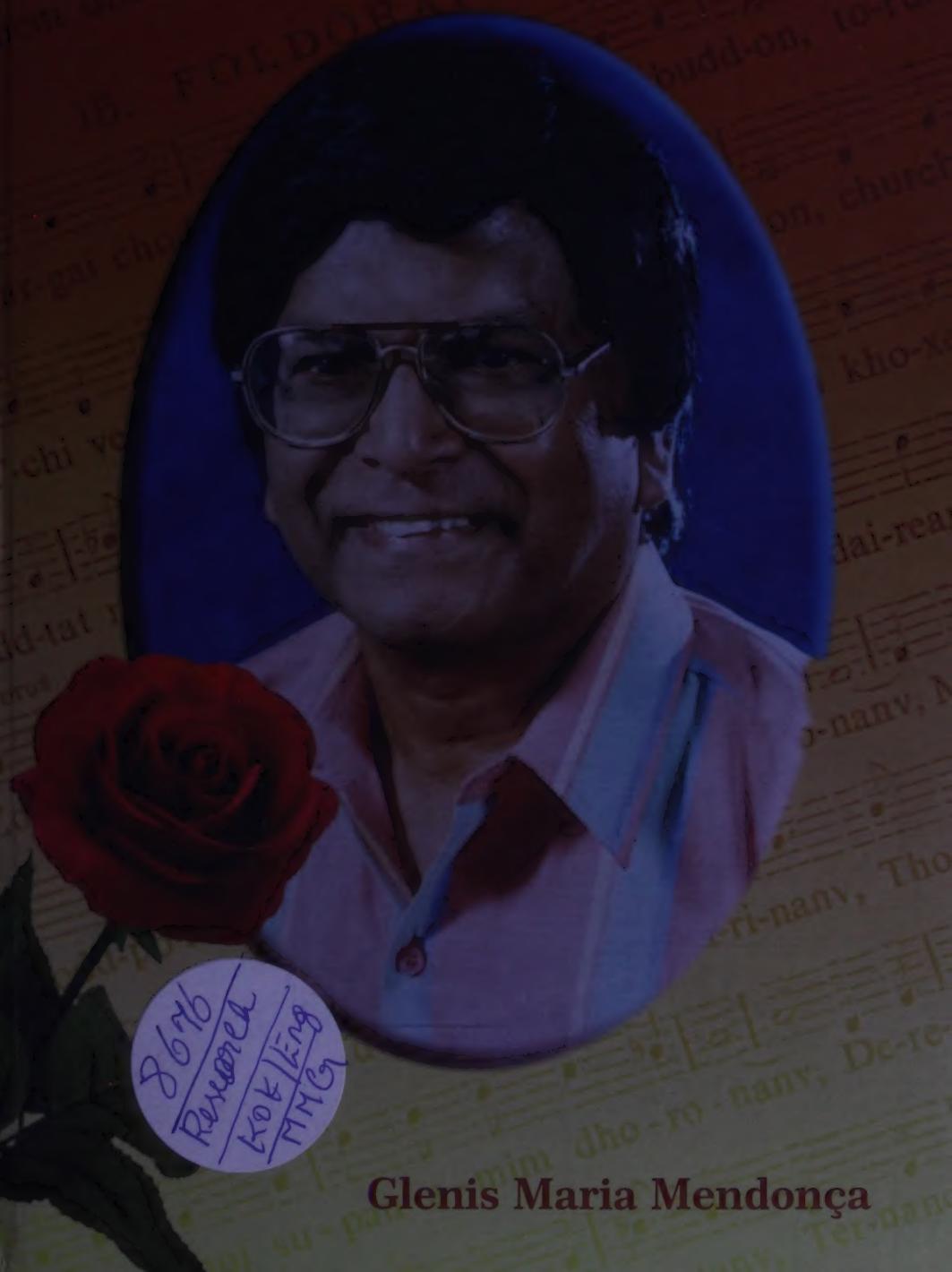


# *The Rose Blooms*

## A Study of Alfred Rose's Lyrics



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Glenis Maria Mendonça











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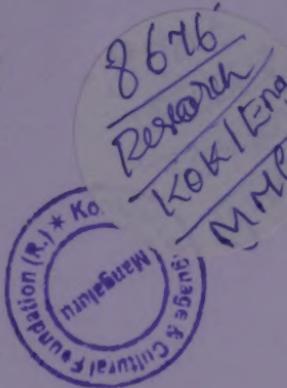
World Konkani Centre



# The Rose Blooms

A Study of  
Alfred Rose's Lyrics

Love,  
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# *The Rose Blooms*

*A Study of*  
*Alfred Rose's Lyrics*

Glenis Maria Mendonça

2022



**DALGADO KONKNNI AKADEMI**  
Panaji, Goa.

# **The Rose Blooms**

**Glenis Maria Mendonça**

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## Foreword

### **We Appreciate... The Legacy Carries On ...**

*The Rose Blooms*, a detailed study on the lyrics of Alfred Rose is an incredible work of literature. Alfred Rose, an institution by himself, created records and fame in the field of music. He was one of the most popular singers and composers of Konkani stage. One will not be surprised to know that he has sung or composed nearly 5,000 Konkani songs in his lifetime. Goans not only appreciated Alfred's songs in tiatrs but they listened to his songs on All India Radio. They do it even to this day. He composed music for English songs too. We just cannot ignore his colossal contribution to the music, songs and especially the Konkani language.

The contribution of such Konkani stalwarts to the culture of Goa and to prop Konkani to a greater height is precisely the reason to document the deeds of heroes of yesteryears. Dalgado Konknni Akademi believes that the writers from the field of Konkani should engage in this type of work of research / documentation and establish a new trend of writing. Contributing stories, essays and poetries to the magazines is a beginning for a writer, which needs to be continued with bigger responsibilities as documentation and research work. I congratulate Glenis bai Maria Mendonça for accepting such a challenge, thereby discovering the implication of the lyrics of Alfred Rose and compiling a book aptly titled *The Rose Blooms*.

Alfred Rose remained one of the most popular tiatrists even after his death. Many websites are dedicated to him. To his fans and admirers, he was known as The Melody King of Goa. HMV recording company called him The Man with the Golden Voice. Alfred Rose was also gifted with other sobriquets as Konkani's Ambassador, International Superstar and the Living Legend of Konkani Music. Six decades of musical popularity to his credit,

Alfred was christened Junior Rose by versatile Konkani tiatrist C. Alvares, as he was the youngest among the actors during his tiatr debut way back in 1943. Alfred was also a Konkani film star having acted in films as *Nirmonn*, *Bhum-crantlo Monis*, etc.

Glenis bai, while elaborating her views on the lyrics of Alfie, as he was affectionately called in his inner circles, did not miss out many 'Firsts' in the life of Alfred Rose. He brought out the first Konkani Audio Cassette. He had the distinction of publishing fourteen song books containing lyrics of the numerous songs he had composed. His published his novel *Vingas Monte Cristo-che*, based on the famous novel 'The Count of Monte Cristo' of Alexander Dumas on the father of hypnotism - *Abbe Faria*. His other novels included *Monis vo Devchar*, which is based on his drama by the same title. He introduced the concept of non-stop drama in Konkani with his presentation of *Director Saib* in 1961.

It is very interesting to know some of the enthralling facts of Alfred Rose mentioned in this book. Alfred Rose produced and directed his first tiatr *Hench Tem Karan* in 1956. Some of his hit tiatrs were *Rogtak Tanelelo*, *Lakhpoti Nhouro*, *Dotor Advogad*, *Bhangaracho Hoti*, *Angvonnechi Vhokol*, *Monis vo Devchar*, *Pesanvkar*, *Nirmonn vo Formonn* and *Natalanchi Bhett*. Alfred Rose also composed music for Bollywood films. He composed the music for the Hindi film *Love in Goa*. He started his own band called 'Rosebuds Swing Band' along with his brothers Marshall and Albert. He performed in various parts of India and in London, Paris, Frankfurt and the Middle East. Wearing a Panama hat on his head and a magic wand in his hand delivering the opening song for tiatrs became his most exclusive image.

Time and again referred by the author, the personal interview by Alfred Rose's better half (Rita Rose) has given some perceptions of the songs which she sang along with her husband and children. In this context, it would have been more interesting if the circumstances of the song were explained. No doubt the thoughts in the songs are elaborated and some references are also given. the reader would have appreciated the man behind the singer, the

man behind the composer, the man behind the thinker and the the man behind the music. Glenis bai needs to be appreciated for her special trip to Mahim, Bombay to meet Rita bai and get more background of Alfred's popular songs. Akademi applauds the support and cooperation given to her by the Rose family in preparing for the publication of this book.

A song is a combination of lyrics and music with distinct and fixed melodies using patterns of sound and silence. Written words created specifically for music, or for which music is specifically created are called lyrics. Therefore, a song is not always poetry but pre-existing poetry that can be set to composed music. Alfred Rose used a blend of literature having a story, situation, question, answer, emotion, mankind, family, friendship, calamity, nationalism, nature, relationship, etc. which are well explained by Glenis bai. She has provided quotes of some of the songs and given insight of the lyrics and while concluding, she gave observations and findings of the study and hidden treasures and prospects for further research. This book will undoubtedly serve as the guide to Alfred Rose's world of creations. Dalgado Konknni Akademi is content for having created yet another feather of publishing a research book in its endeavor.

We would like to make a special mention about the inclusion of parts of popular Konkani songs as primary source from the book *Gitanjali* compiled by Fr. Joaquim Fernandes, blog of Edward bab Verdes and *Alfred Rose - The Melody King* book by Isidoro bab Dantas. We thank each one of them. It is noticed that the stanzas of the songs were written during the period prior to the standardization of Konkani. Hence we obtained permission from Fr. Joaquim Fernandes, Edward bab Verdes and Isidoro bab Dantas to effect the needed changes in the lyrics of the songs, which they agreed. These changes are done in accordance with the writing norms of the Akademi.

On behalf of Dalgado Konknni Akademi, we take this opportunity to appreciate Glenis bai Maria Mendonça for writing



this book and giving impetus to our 'Sodvaur Youzonn'. We thank Dr. Rafael bab Fernandes and Tomazinho bab Cardozo for giving thoughtful insights over the contents of this book. We also express our gratitude to Willy bab Goes for the wonderful cover design with a 'rose' and musical notes in the background and all those who have rendered their help to build the strong base of this book and make the works of Alfred Rose immortal. It is my endeavor to thank ED's Printers and its owner Melvin bab Fernandes who has perfectly finished his work on time with personal interest.

We appeal to the talented personalities of Goa including Glenis bai Mendonça to apply their mind on different aspects and carry out the research work on famous personalities of Goa in any field of art and culture to preserve the heritage of our land and our mother tongue Konkani. With such an initiative, I can say for sure, our legacy will be carried on.

**Vincy Quadros**  
President  
Dalgado Konknni Akademi



## **Message from Rita Rose**

It gives me immense pleasure to write these few words in appreciation of *The Rose Blooms: A Study of Alfred Rose's Lyrics*, written by Dr. Glenis Mendonça.

Alfred was a multi-faceted person and a great human being. His songs which run in thousands, in both English and Konkani, had positive inputs and value-based themes, which inspired his listeners and are relevant even today, in this digital age.

I have read the manuscript prior to publication. It is done with my consent. The author has used two sources (*Gitanjali* by Fr. Joaquim Fernandes and the blog by Mr. Edward Verdes), which have errors in spellings and which are corrected with my consent.

Alfred Rose has left a rich legacy for the Goans which has to be tapped through varied avenues, books like these, Musicals, Singing Competitions, Quizzes etc., so that the legacy of the Melody King lives on.

Dr. Glenis Mendonça is a prolific writer and has researched extensively for this book. According to my knowledge, she is also multi-talented and I wish her success in all her ventures, specially writing more books which will be useful for posterity.

*Musically Yours*

Rita Rose

**Rita Rose**

## PREFACE

*The joys of sailing a stormy sea drew the curtains on a tumultuous voyage with a smile on the sailor's face! The crew deserve a pat on their backs!*

The journey to write *The Rose Blooms: A Study of Alfred Rose's Lyrics* began on 14 Aug. 2019 when under the mentorship of the Ex-President (DKA) Shri. Tomazinho Cardozo, I submitted a proposal to Dalgado Konknni Akademi under the *South-var* Scheme of the Akademi envisioning a study of Alfred Rose's lyrics. A few months back, I was fascinated as a judge of several All Goa Konkani Singing Competitions where I heard over sixty percent participants choose and sing songs composed by the Melody King. What was so alluring about these songs? Why Alfred Rose! What was so glamorous and wonderful about him? Curiosity made me go deeper and explore!

I drowned myself in an online collection of the Rose lyrics by Edward Verdes: <http://edskantaram.blogspot.com>, and was awestruck by the passion by which Verdes had written them by merely listening to the songs over his headphones. I even contacted him and was promised a lot of help. Verdes kept his word and I am grateful to him. A collection of lyrics by Fr. Joaquim Fernandes *Gitanjali* (2013) was leant to me. It was a handy tool as a primary text in print form. Coincidentally, Isidore Dantas' *Alfred Rose: The King of Melody* (2019) came in time to assist my study and initiate my friendship with Rita Rose who I was introduced for the first time at his book launch in the capital city. This bond has come a long way to sharing, caring and being special lifelong buddies to carry forward the legacy of Alfred Rose.

I made a trip to Mahim, Mumbai and visited the Rose family in October 2019. Warm and endearing encounters, whilst sharing views over Alfred Rose's lyrics, files and writings and a day long interview to gather the ghosts behind his lyrics, was my endeavour. It was partially met. There was more to be explored with a close reading of the lyrics itself. The next year was the

endemic pandemic which gave me respite to sit and write. While the world agonized over the lock-down, I organized myself to prepare my ten chapters for this book. There was very little information available on his lyrics. It had to be uncovered through a close sub-textual reading. Most of the material was gathered from my personal interview with Alfred Rose's wife, Rita Rose. She was very cooperative and kind. I cannot thank her enough. Engelbert Rose too, was very generous to share his prized family photographs for this book. He deserves credit and appreciation.

The Dalgado Konknni Akademi family comprising of Mr. Vincy Quadros (President), Mr. Daniel DeSouza (Vice-President), Mr. William Fernandes (Secretary), Mr. Celso Fernandes (Treasurer) and all the others on the Executive Council have been my strong backbone to this venture. I place on record my gratitude to all of them.

I met a lot of friends along the way who narrated their stories about Alfred Rose and the love they shared for the Melody King and his songs. There was Felipe Dias (Ex-Dubai) and Neves Oliviera (Salcette- Goa) who were common friends of the Rose couple. Milagres D'Souza (Mapusa) and Joshua De Souza (MLA Mapusa) along with his office staff, who helped in so many ways to make this dream come true. The singing heart-throbs of Goa-Aniceto and Anthony San, a big thank-you to the two of you for sharing your stories about the special place Alfred Rose had in your life. There were more...but time and space restrain their mention. My heartfelt gratitude to this extended family of friends.

I am grateful to Prof. Rafael Fernandes, who provided valuable insights to add significant ideas to this work. My heartfelt appreciation is due to my Principal Dr. Sr. Maria Lizanne A. C. and colleagues from Carmel College for Women, Nuvem, who were ever kind and supportive towards me. Dr. Carlos M. Fernandes was very generous to allow me access to the Alfred Rose works from Central Library. Thank-you very much for

**everything.**

To my family members: my parents Joaquim and Julia D'Souza, my husband Gordon and children Reinaldo and Angel, you all are my superstars, specially in the last lap of this journey. Braving the ordeal of the dreadful Corona virus, you all helped me to tighten the final strings of this venture. I love you so much! I remember my departed parents-in law, Caje and Flavia Mendonça and their craze for Alfred Rose and his songs. They must be surely smiling from the skies!

To all those who stood behind the curtains, doing the silent unseen and thankless tasks, I whisper a silent prayer in gratitude for you. May you all be blest thousandfold. The journey does not end here. The lilting tunes of Alfred Rose continue to hum in the minds and hearts of the countless Rose fans in every corner of the globe.

On the 90<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Alfred Rose, I dedicate this book to all the fans and lovers of this celebrated artist, who enjoyed his Konkani writings, lyrics and continue to celebrate his legacy and love for Konkani songs. May the reverberations of Alfred Rose's songs continue to bring positive vibes to heal the broken world we live in. May the fragrance of the Rose bloom in every Konkani- loving space on this globe! Long live Goa's Melody King!

**Glenis Maria Mendonça**



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## Alfred Rose: The Man, Melody and Musical Repertoire

1

Goa is known not just for its swaying palms, sandy shores, balmy beaches and architectural marvels in the form of churches and temples, but also for its fish, football, feni and music. In fact, music runs in the bloodstream of every *niz Goemkar* (genuine Goan). Be it *manddo-dulpodam*, *fado*, *gaionam-gitam* or *cantaram*, the lilting rhythms of music are an integral part of Goan culture. The popular melodies play on the lips of every Konkani speaker, not only in Goa but also in many other parts of India as also on the international diasporic map. Among the several popular musicians and melody makers who have contributed to Konkani secular music and tiatr, the name of Alfred Rose is indeed stellar. Over the last seventy odd years, he has been a rave not just on the Konkani firmament in Goa, but also in Mumbai, Mangaluru, Middle East (including Beirut, Lebanon) and Gulf, Far East, Africa, U.S.A, Canada and the United Kingdom. There has hardly been a time when Akashvani Mumbai, Goa or even radio stations in London, have not played

at least one song of Alfred Rose. He is the mega-artist, 'maha kolakar', not merely in terms of his voluminous contributions to Konkani writing, but also to *tiatr* and in particular to Konkani *gitam*.

## 1.1 The Rose Blooms

Alfred Rose was born on 5 August 1932 in the serene village of Nivim-Aldona in Bardez taluka of the North Goa district. His parents, Ambrose Fernandes and Dolorosa Fernandes, had their leanings towards the field of *tiatr*. His father had been bestowed the stage name A. M. B. Rose by the Jesuits of Karachi, and that got stuck to him and the second name served the son Alfred as well. Alfred (affectionately called Alfie) had three siblings, two brothers Marshall and Albert, and a sister Ely. Probably, his parents never dreamt that he would be a luminary in the field of Konkani *tiatr*, music and singing.

In the realm of Konkani *gitam*, it was perhaps destined that a mammoth artist of his calibre bloom to take Konkani to newer heights. He was amongst the rarest of *tiatristy*, directors, musicians and artists in that besides composing his own songs and writing his scripts, he also composed their music, apart from directing and acting in his own theatrical productions. How did Alfie reach such great heights?

The little three-year-old Alfie was brought to Bombay (now Mumbai) and admitted to the Sonapur school of *Little Flower of Jesus*. His high-pitched soprano was nurtured by his *tiatrist* mentor Valent Mascarenhas who was convinced that the boy would shine further.

Consequently, Valent Mascarenhas informed the choir-master of the Dabul parish about Alfie's talent, and soon seven-year-old Alfred became part of the St. Xavier's Church Choir, Dabul. Thereafter, he began singing in the Sonapur Church choir where he steadily rose to greater heights.

It was at this time that Alfie sang his first solo song at Jehangir

Hall, Colaba and stole the hearts of his audience. Yet, who would have ever dreamt that one day in the distant future, this same seven-year-old prodigy would be a star in the Konkani musical scenario across the world!!! That apart, this gifted boy went on to win several prizes in singing events. Moreover, Alfie received compliments from several stalwarts in the field on music who told his father that the boy was indeed prodigious. For instance, Fr. Correia, a Jesuit connoisseur of music had showered praises on him and, to quote Dantas, had averred, “Your voice is a gift!”.

Alfred's debut performance was a famous *cantar* “Kiteak Jiv Khata”, a trio along with Selvyn and Thomas Coogan, in Jose Mendes' (Ms. Ida) tiatr *Kombekar* in his own village of Calvim-Aldona. This song drew a thunderous applause from the audience and this was the beginning of no end to his singing.

Noticing the teenage prodigy on stage, in 1945, J.P. Souzalin invited Alfie to act in his tiatr *Poilea Cheddeacho Baltim*. Staged in the eminent Princess Theatre, Bhangwadi in Bombay, Alfred sang the English song, “When are you going to pay?” He gradually got rooted into singing and acting in tiatrs, singing on a professional stage and was greatly indebted to J.P. Souzalin, whom he deservedly considered to be his *guru*.

Being the youngest Rose in the tiatr fraternity, he was given the nickname of Junior Rose by the famous C. Alvares in 1943. He was happy to have Rose in his tiatr which was staged at the Damodar Thackersey theatre hall in Parel, Mumbai. Junior Rose acted in nearly sixty tiatrs of C. Alvares and invited his troupe to Goa in the years 1946 and 1950. In the plays staged subsequently, he performed varied roles. For instance, in the tiatr *Mazor Cat Zalem*, Alfred performed the role of an octogenarian. In *Duddvakar Zatoloi*, he enacted the role of a blind person. He went on to sing almost eight (mainly poignant) cantos in this tiatr. In 1952, he changed his name from Junior Rose to Alfred Rose in C. Alvares' *Nouro Foslo Saguadi Diun*. Alfred Rose was fortunate to join the illustrious Kid Boxer to perform tiatrs in Africa in 1960. It is estimated that in all, Alfred Rose has

performed in around 10,000 shows in several theatres of different directors.

## 1.2 Musical Maestro par Excellence

When one's father is himself the source of motivation to learn music and play musical instruments, there is no turning back. A.M.B. Rose inspired his sons and ensured that they learnt music. Thus, Alfred learnt to read and write music at an early age. He even learnt to play the violin and guitar.

However, writing music for one's own compositions is indeed a rare talent. The well-known saxophonist B. Paul was instrumental in prodding Alfred Rose to write music for his own songs. Except for the popular Western pop-hits whose tunes he adapted to Konkani lyrics, Alfred Rose not just wrote his own lyrics, but also the music and sang them either alone or with his co-singer(s) on stage.

In 1950, Alfred Rose formed his own home production, a band named Rose Buds Swing Band. This band was very popular in Goa as well as in Bombay and played for weddings and festive events. The three Rose brothers were part of this band: Marshal Rose on the saxophone and Albert Rose on the guitar, while Alfred himself did the crooning. The band was so popular in the sixties with super-duper hits like "Lighthouse" (a song which is still heard on his Silver Jubilee cassette), that they were specially invited to perform at the Margao Carnival celebrations in Maddel. They gave a smashing performance and the audience was sent into peals of 'encore'.

Reverberations of Alfred Rose are felt in several Konkani films of his times. *Amchem Noxib*, *Sukhachem Sopon*, *Boglanit* were the three films wherein he was part of the cast. However, he also wrote the lyrics and musical score for *Boglanit*, besides doing the playback singing for the film. Apart from his wife Rita Rose as the main cast, the film has Prem Kumar as well as Alfred himself playing the role of a doctor. Some of the super hit songs from *Boglanit* include "Nimannem Besanv", "Tum Mhojem Sukh"

and the popular duet “Osoch Fotoitai”.

In the realm of tiatrs as also in the world of music, Alfred Rose was equally popular. At a time when singing and acting in Konkani tiatrs was viewed as a not-so-respectable enterprise, Alfred Rose embraced and enhanced it. In particular, the songs sung in tiatrs were often lewd and had a bawdy undertone. For instance, songs intended to take a dig at inappropriately dressed women; those meant to give a tit-for-tat to someone's malevolent intention or songs indulging in unpleasant grape-vines, were the ones which were presented on stage during his contemporary times. It is at this crucial juncture that Alfred Rose's contribution was made and is seen as historic and noteworthy. Infact, he played a catalytic role to ensure that tiatr would resurrect itself from the ashes of disrepute and reach the apogee of respect and popular acclaim.

It is significant to mention here the names of some of Alfred Rose's well known tiatrs such as, *Dotor Advogad, Hench Tem Karan, Nirmonn v/o Formonn, Lakhpoti Novro, Director Saib, Monis vo Devchar, Natalanchi Bhett, Bhangaracho Hoti, Rogtak Tanelolo, Mhaka Poi Tuka Poi, Amchem Nisontonn, Angvonnechi Vhokol, Pensanvkar, Somestancho Kumpar*. These are only a few names which one can easily recall. In most of these, he composed the cantos, songs (solos, duets, trios) and even wrote the musical scores for the band. Besides, he motivated amateur singers to take to the stage and sing. He mentored them and boosted their confidence by personally composing their songs.

His songs were based on leitmotifs which had a wide range of relevance to the social, political, cultural and historical aspects of life. The discussion in the forthcoming chapters, will dwell in-depth on the varied themes, societal issues and cultural strands which Alfred Rose wove into his *gitam/cantaram*.

### 1.3 Alfred Rose: The Konkani Ambassador

The talent and musical geniuses of Alfred Rose did not remain confined to the geographies of Goa and Mumbai. This talented Konkani artist settled in Mumbai, was gradually getting invited to perform Konkani musical shows and tiatras all over the Konkani world. It was obvious that Alfred Rose's popularity as an artist of Konkani tiatras had grown by leaps and bounds.

Alfred was a sensation in the neighbouring state of Karnataka, particularly in Mangalore (now Mangaluru). Several Konkani artists from Mangalore invited him and performed alongside to glorify the Konkani language, culture and its ethos.

Alfred Rose aspired to unify and homogenise the hybridised Konkani community which had created virtual walls of dialectical, cultural and geographical divides after being far-flung due to their presence in different states. Bombay and Sawantwadi (in Maharashtra), Mangalore and Karwar (in Karnataka), Cochi (in Kerala) had erstwhile Goans who had fled to establish themselves in newer territories due to historical reasons. Their Konkani dialect was laced with the language of their respective states of domicile. For instance, Mangaloreans would speak a Konkani with several words borrowed from Kannada, and Sawantwadi Konkani had the flavour of Marathi. But, as an ambassador of Konkani, Alfred's songs transcended these apparent walls and rose to unify Konkani, the language and its peoples. The lyrics of his popular songs "Ami Sogile Ek" or "Munglurkar Vo Goenkar" are instances of his attempt to annihilate the boundaries and divides created by geographies, unpleasant history and a state-specific culture which could create discord among the Konkani people. In the song "Mungllurkar Vo Goemkar" Alfred Rose tries to sort the predicament of a son who has a *Mungllurkar* father and a Goan mother and faces a grave identity crisis. So, he attempts a resolution and concludes that he is neither of the two but a *Nizacho Konkonnkar*, a true Konkani person.

*Goenkar Mungllurkar, Karvarkar,  
Konkonnich mati*

*Tea bhair Malvonnkar, Vengurlekar mandcheo  
nhoi ganvcheo zati*

*Ekvottan pettoum-ia Konkani bhaxechio vati.*  
(Dantas 38)

Likewise, in “Ami Soglle Ek”, Alfred sings to establish a similar unity which transcends all divides. He says that we are Goans first. Despite our regional differences, we stand united as Konkani people.

*Goenkar, ami Goenkar,  
Bardezkar Saxttikar vo Ilhaskar,  
Bhas amchi mat mat mudar,  
Tori soglle ami Goenche Goenkar,  
Tech porim Savantvaddikar  
Malvonnkar, Vengurlekar ani Karvarkar,  
Dusre asat bhav amche Mungllurkar,  
Punn ami soglle ek Konkonnkar... ”*

(Dantas 39)

Thus, we see how Alfred Rose was the ambassador for Konkani unity and amity despite all odds and cultural differences. Over time, his popularity drew him not merely to neighbouring states, but also to varied countries all over the world.

Francis D'Costa, President of D'Costa Financial Corporation invited him to Canada in 1999, to be an ambassador for Konkani song, music and culture. Much earlier in 1979, the Goan Cultural Society in Germany, invited him to make presentations of his plays and songs in Germany. This was not the end, but just a beginning to many more international trips. He travelled to several countries like Africa, France, Canada, United Kingdom, Beirut, Lebanon, the Middle East and Gulf and could be safely considered the ambassador for the Konkani language and its culture to the international audiences.

## 1.4 Titles and Acclaims

Engineer Franklin De Souza in his book *Alfred Rose Konkani Baxechi Maha Kalakar* (2002) estimates that Alfie has written approximately 5000 plus songs with music and has even sung most of them. Around 1,500 songs he claims are in English. If one Konkani song has around three stanzas, each song has around 24 lines. Imagine the volume of lyrical writing that Alfred Rose has to his repertoire! In his book *Alfred Rose: The King of Melody* (2019), Isidore Dantas has painstakingly enlisted more than a thousand titles of songs in English and Konkani (including his *mandde-dulpodams*). He has also documented his albums, cassettes as well as their contents and posters.

Due to Alfred Rose's wide spread fame and glorious musical contributions, he was bestowed with several titles and acclaims. Some of the titles include: Goa's Melody King, International Superstar, The Man with a Golden Voice, Sultan of the Swing, Living Legend of Konkani Music, Music Maestro, Ambassador of Konkani (Konkani Rajdoot), All-in-One-Alfie and The Complete Entertainer.

Most of these sobriquets were bestowed upon him by music companies, organisations, clubs and individual artists stalwarts. For instance, the illustrious journalist John Gomes called him *Sub Kuch Alfie* and then again Power House Talent. The well-known tiatrist Souza Ferrao gave him the title The Legend of Konkani Songs and Music.

Alfred Rose won several awards and acclaims to add fresh feathers to his musical genius.

- Goa Konknni Akademi Award
- The Coca-Cola Award
- Kala Academy Award
- International Cross Award by Cross Organization-Mumbai in 1990.
- Songeet Sagor Award by MANDD SOBHANN, Mangalore

- Best Male Singer Award by GOAN REVIEW in 1999.
- Mayor's Medal, Mumbai
- Goa State Cultural Award (given by the Government of Goa, posthumously to Alfred Rose in the presence of Rita Rose in 2003)

Besides these, there were others who invited him to perform and felicitated him for his immense contribution to Konkani music and writing.

## 1.5 Alfred Rose: Konkani Writer

Very little is known about Alfred Rose as a writer of other genres in Konkani, besides his song-lyrics. Isidore Dantas' *Alfred Rose: The King of Melody* (2019), in the ninth chapter "Alfred Rose Ek Borovpi", documents the varied writings of Alfie and the fourteen books he published ranging from novels, comics and song books. He published around ten books of songs, some of them with musical scores published within. As a fiction writer, his novella *Vingas Monte Cristochem* (1963) has a mention of Abade Faria and the tale behind the famous Konkani expression '*kator re bhaji*'. It revolves round the travails of a sailor Edmund Dantas. It is a poignant saga roping in the history of Count Monte Cristo. Likewise, another novel *Munis Vo Devchar* (1964), is in fact an adaptation of his tiatr with the same name. This non-stop drama has been creatively woven into a book and inspired greatly by William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Rose is also well known for writing radio plays as well. A few plays were quite popular on AIR.

Besides these two works of fiction, Alfred Rose published comics for children called *Zomnintli Bhirant* (1973). It was seen as the very first Konkani comic book in print. Alfred Rose considered this as a novel experiment in writing Konkani stories for children with appealing graphic images and promised that this was only the beginning of many more to follow. For the comics book, he sought inspiration from the popular Arabian Nights. Thus, the tales are set in the desert of Sahara.

Alfred Rose has written several articles in English and Konkani for newspapers and writings for magazines and parish bulletins. One of the most noteworthy parish bulletins where he regularly wrote in 2000 was SMILE (of St. Michael's Mahim parish). A few are re-published in the above-mentioned book by Isidore Dantas.

Thus, Alfred Rose has a musical repertoire spanning several decades. He was a multi-talented personality and loved to experiment with his music and writings. He lives on through his writings, particularly his songs.





## Social Values and Morals in **Alfred Rose's Lyrics**

2

The ancient Greek writer Horace believed that the purpose of literature was twofold: to teach a moral lesson, but also to please its audience. He encapsulated this in the Latin phrase *dulce et utile* meaning sweet and useful. Therefore, the aim of literature is to teach with delight, instruct as well as entertain.

Something akin to this Greek motif is achieved by Alfred Rose through his songs. Each of the songs he wrote was laced with a positive message, a moral lesson to learn from, and of course delighted the listeners with its musical craft, melodious music and poetic lyrical qualities. Thus, his lyrics truly embodied the Horatian expression *dulce et utile* to their ultimate end.

### **2.1 A Critique on Hollow Social Values**

Alfred Rose was deeply touched by the society of his times, a society which was growing avaricious and displayed hollow morality. He used his songs to amend the wrongs of society and

create social awareness. There was not a single song, however overt or covert, which did not have a moral or message.

In the song “Sonvsar Polko” (*Kantarancho Shelo I*), Alfred sings about the materialistic world which has made man blinded by money. He uses the beautiful simile of the moth which is drawn to the flame comparing it to man who is consumed by materialism. He tries to instil the ‘fear of God’ (*Dev-bhirant*) in the minds of his listeners. And so, he sings:

*Dispotto giraz mag, polki giresktai mago naku.  
Chorun, luttun, sottoun, giresktai punzai naku.  
Kedinch ti poch’chinam, oxi ektthail’li giresktai.  
Giresktor zatoloi, tantunt Devachos hat zai*

(Fernandes 01)

Riches amassed are only transitory illusions. We do not take them along with us to our graves. Hence, it is important that we preach and practise moral values and live a devout life. Wealth accumulated through cheating, stealing and illicit ways can never make man happy as it only shows the hollowness of man. The lyrics bring to mind the twentieth century English poet T. S. Eliot, who wrote *Hollow Men* (1925) to express his disgust over the debasement of human values in a corrupt twentieth century world.

In his song “Vaitt Sobd”, Alfred Rose laments over the social evils that rupture our societal fabric. He decries the social values which have gradually corroded and turned crass. “Nennar zaum xiklolle, uchartat sobd pozdde...” (Whether educated or not, their utterances are gross). Alfred Rose through these lyrics exposes how the world has become a virtual hell, where no fear of God exists, children use cuss words and anarchy rules the roost. He suggests how education is hollow and bears no fruit if left directionless. Alfred Rose gives a clear message to be respectful and moral in order to win the favour of God. He avers:

*Vaitt sobd ulouncheak soddxi  
Tukach boreponn haddxi*

*Sonvsarantuch sorginchem sukh tum bhogxi*

(Fernandes 12)

Evil and malevolence bring in curses and negativity. This idea is purported in his song “Xirap”. Man is impatient and cannot display tolerance. Hence the habit to curse and spit expletives is not uncommon. When we sow the seed of curses, it takes deep roots in our system and grows into a huge tree of evil. In this song, Alfred Rose is urging his listeners to stop cursing and start blessing those who do evil to us.

*Zori tor xirap ghetolo inosent tronnar bosta  
Xirap ghaltoleakuch xirap bhuzta...  
Vaitt mhunnttat xirap avoi-bapaicho  
Vait mhunnttat xirap tea goribancho...*

(Fernandes 14)

Alfred Rose clearly articulates his moral message: never cheat the poor or curse the innocent and lowly, for it will rebound into evil for the evil doer. If the receiver of the curse is innocent, the curse befalls the foul mouth that utters it. It is most vile to receive curses from one's parents or from the lowly paupers.

Alfred Rose was a visionary. He foresaw a universal materialistic realm surrounded by capitalistic forces. It was ruled by vitamin M=MONEY. In his song “Duddu”, he does not hesitate to blatantly satirize the contemporary lifestyle which is centred around money. We need *duddu* (money) for just about everything, or else our life is *koddu* (embittered). The opening lines of the song “Duddu” show how the rapacious greed for wealth has resulted in perpetration of crimes, thus explaining why social evils have risen.

*To soro kaddta kiteak, zai dekhun duddu,  
To chorio korta kiteak, zai dekhun duddu,  
To sorti kaddta kiteak, zai dekhun duddu,  
Duddu, duddu, duddu, duddu....*

(Fernandes 95)

In the above lines he implicitly hints at alcoholism, burglary, vices like gambling all in the name of earning fast money. Money rules our lives completely. We cannot function without it. Whether it is a baptism, wedding or a funeral, we still need money to make things happen. The lyricist is trying to expose our money-oriented leanings and shows how man greedily clings on to material wealth.

## 2.2 Family Values

Several songs written by Alfred Rose, including solos and duets are like meaningful poetic sermons on unifying the family and upholding family values. Whether it is caring for the elderly and showing respect and obeisance to parents, or reinforcing unity and love among disunited family members, Alfred Rose's song would move the listeners' heart and mind. Love between siblings, wisdom of grand-parents, love between husband-wife, mother-child, trust and betrayal among family members are only a few instances to indicate how Alfred Rose used the medium of song to instil family values among his listeners or audiences. In a personal interview with the present researcher, Rita Rose affirmed that Alfred Rose practised what he preached. He was a family man and brought up his own three children with sound moral values.

The need to show love, care and concern for elderly parents is revealed in his song "Korit to Bhogit" (You beget what you give). The song re-creates the episode of an elderly woman who is bitterly weeping over her sorry state in a home for the elderly. She pours out her feelings to a visitor and tells how ungrateful her only son and daughter-in-law have been. They abandoned her in the home for the aged. However, she admits that she too in her youthful days had ill-treated her own mother-in-law and deserved the present fate from her son/daughter-in-law. She has no reason to grumble. In the last stanza of the song, she tells the youth not to disrespect their elders and parents. Treat them with humility and love. Or else, the same fate may befall the doer.

The love between mother and son is seen in several songs. “Mummy Mhaka Vengent Tujie Dhor” is a poignant duet between a boy and his widowed mother who has raised the little child with a lot of difficulties. The child expresses gratitude and sings:

*Mummy mhaka vengent tujie dhor,  
Gopant dhorun jiv dhadoxi kor,  
Bhangaracho dongor diloi tor,  
Tujea mogak zauchonam sor*

(Verdes 87)

Originally sung by Rita Rose and Schubert, this song has heart-wrenching lyrics which make the listeners feel pathos for the plight of the widow and the intelligent and understanding responses of the boy who promises to take care of the mother after he grows up. Hold me in your warm embrace and make me feel secure, the little boy urges. Even a mountain of gold cannot be held equivalent to your immense love, the boy sings.

There is yet another song which uses the parent-child motif: “Mhoji Mummy”, where the little girl Veena sings a song in praise of her mummy and daddy. She sings about her mother being responsible for her birth and looking after her along with her father, who too loves her mother dearly. Both Veena's parents love her very much and she feels secure in their presence.

“Mhoje Maim” carries this message of maternal love in a filial bond expressed through an adult mind. The lyrics are inspired by Harlan Howard's song “No Charge” (1974), an American song where a young boy puts a price tag on his services to the family in terms of dollars. Rose's lyrics, just like Howard's, are written in third person and narrate an interesting episode of a teenage son who approaches his mother with a bill. This was a bill which had several errands and jobs the mother told the boy to do and the boy is asking the mother for fees. Looking after his sister, going to make purchases at the grocers, for studying hard and getting good marks in the examination, washing his own clothes--- were

only a few things that the boy had sought remuneration for. The flabbergasted mother gives him another bill which reads

*Nov mhoine hea pottamt, tuka sambhando tachem  
kainch naka,*

*Duyent aslo tednam, rati foldlio tachem kainch naka,*

*Tuka iskolak dhaddun, atam kolej xikounk tachem  
kainch naka,*

*Tuka rit-dekh xikounk, boro rosto dakhounk tachem-i  
kainch naka...*

(Fernandes 183)

The mother enlists the numerous sacrifices she made to raise the boy: carrying him in her womb for nine months, looking after him during his sickness, sending him to school and later to college, teaching him good values ----and for all this and more there was no price tag. The son was driven to tears. He realised how maternal love surpassed material remuneration and was indeed priceless. Though the lyrics of "Mhoje Maim" may overtly seem like a translation of Howard's "No Charge", we can notice how Alfred Rose has brilliantly adapted the American lyrics to the Konkani cultural milieu. According to Wikipedia, "No Charge" was originally sung by Melba Montgomery and was rendered subsequently into other versions by artists such as Johnny Cash, Tammy Wynette and Shirley Caesar. It seems quite likely that Alfred Rose was inspired by the original version of Howard in the seventies.

Motherly love is given a different dimension through realistic episodes which are narrated through song by Alfred Rose. "Tujea Bhurgeank Sambhall" recounts the pathos-filled saga of a mother who is searching for her missing son in school, streets and almost everywhere. She prays hard and offers novenas, uses help from the police, but cannot trace her seven-year-old boy. One day when she was narrating her tale to her friend, a voice called out to her. She turned back only to realise that it was her son in a terrible condition. He was blind, crippled and was left to beg on the streets. She runs and embraces him. The last stanza of

the song draws in the moral message to all parents:

*Inosent bhurgeanche te kortat halaval  
Inosent bhurgeanche poi osle hal  
Duddvanchi as polleun kitem kortat  
Dekhun bhoinni mhoje, bhurgeank tujea sambhall*  
(Fernandes 210)

Innocent children are exploited and reduced to being street beggars. Never get lured by monetary offers. It is time we all embrace our children with love. Responsible parenting is the need of the hour. The fate of this hapless mother can be anyone's experience if we are not alert and responsible parents.

“Kan Konnache?” is a song written in third person, narrating the plight of an only child who was born with huge ear pinnas and lobes. The child was the butt of ridicule in school and at play. This caused him a lot of mental and emotional strain. His parents were rich, but felt very sorry for him. However, he needed a donor for his ears to rectify the abnormality. The doctors finally did the surgery and the boy appeared normal with regular sized ears. Whenever he asked *Kan konnache?* (Who has donated these ears to me?), he was never told the name of the donor. However, the last stanza of the song unfolds the suspense; it was the sacrifice of the mother who falls terribly ill after donating her ears to her child to save him from social scorn. And the lyrics tell us how a mother's sacrifice is priceless:

*Palov tichea mathear aslolo, putan veng martoch to  
koddsorlo,  
Donui kan tiche katrun kaddole, ho gutt ticho hanga  
ugto zalo,  
Putak keddneantlo soddounk, tinnem sakrifis kelolo,  
Ho asa bhav-bhoinnimni avoicho mog, konnakuch sor  
nam zatolo* (Fernandes 122)

The mother here always covered her head to hide the fact that she did not have ear pinnas. But one day, the truth springs out and the

son is speechless to see the sacrifice of his mother. The last line breathes the theme of the song, a mother's love is incomparable. She can go to any extremes to make her child happy and comfortable.

"Nimannem Besany" is another song which reinforces the mother-child bond. It throws into focus an episode of a dying mother who, till the very end pines for a glance of her only son. She desires to offer him her final blessings. But fate does not allow her to meet her boy. It is only after she dies that the son comes to visit her. It is too late. Her son weeps over this unquenched desire of his mother.

*Put suskarta: "Maum tum mhaka meuli nam".*

*Mati pasun mhoji tuka favo zali nam.*

*Hoi, nimannea vellar mhoji nodor pasun tujer poddli nam.*

*Hea putachem boreponn polleunk maum tum pavli nam*...

**(Fernandes 210)**

The ardent desire of the mother to meet her son before she dies remains unfulfilled. And hence the lyrics blame worldly fate for such misfortune. Implicitly, Alfred Rose is trying to suggest that children should help in taking care of their elderly parents. The guilt for not doing so will haunt the child forever, just like it does to the son in "Nimannem Besany".

Grandparents play a significant role in instilling strong family values. The attachment of grandchildren towards their grandparents is very intense. In "Pornnem Volter" which literally means 'the old arm-chair', Alfred Rose narrates the wisdom of the elderly *xamaim* (grandma) who bequeaths the singer speaker an old *volter*, arm-chair and gifts his other siblings the house (to his brother) and agricultural land (to his sister). Thinking that this distribution is most unfair, especially because he was her fondest grandchild, the singer is most dejected and later even frustrated. His siblings belittled him and looked down upon him with disdain. In utter desperation one day, he flung the chair on the

wall. Lo and behold! In the hollow of its wood, there were precious stones, diamonds and gems worth so much more than what his siblings received. It is now that the boy realised the wisdom and love of his wizened *xamaim*. By incorporating a narrative through song, Alfred Rose attempts to drill home a message among his listeners: be patient and understand the wisdom and love of the elders. Do not underestimate the intelligence and astuteness of one's grandparents.

### **2.3 Songs of Repentance, Reconciliation and Gratitude**

The values of repentance and reconciliation are invariably Christian values. Alfred's parents A.M.B. Rose and Dolorosa had instilled in him these Christian values through their day-to-day living. As a child, he would be a regular student for his Sunday Catechism classes. Moreover, the Jesuits had groomed his spiritual values in a praise-worthy manner. These values were embedded in his persona and he mirrored them as pertinent themes in his songs.

“Patok Rodttam” is quintessentially a song with repentance as its focal theme. The singer takes the role of a penitent, a sinner who is crying for mercy and salvation. *Kitem hanv korum?* is his refrain which keeps repeating in the song. He has been entrapped in the worldly ways and seeks to redeem himself from the slush of sin. He admits his folly, his *pixeponn* or madness for going against the will of God. Ashamed to face God, he sings with conviction:

*Jivit mhojem sottoilem, kalliz mhojem dukhoilem,  
Hanv bhiyetalom tacheruch odruxtt haddun otoilem.  
Guneanv mhozo, guneanv mhozo,  
Dhonia Deva, guneanv mhozo*

(Fernandes 206)

This song is teeming with emotion and sentiments of a penitent who is searching for mercy and forgiveness. He has felt cheated

and duped; he has felt hurt and wounded. He wants to repent and reconcile with God.

Gratitude and reconciling to the lover's sorry and pitiable plight of blindness is the main idea sung in "Tuzo Sambhali Kortolim". The song which is sung by a lady spells out the predicament of her lover who is struck by blindness and is feeling utterly challenged. The singer admits to living a sinful life of black magic. Her lover had helped her out of it and she wishes to express her gratitude towards him. Therefore, she accepts his blindness and agrees to marry him. The last lines are overflowing with pathos as well as the joy of reconciliation.

*Hany zatam uzyadd tujea donui dolleancho*

*Kazar zaun sambhali hany kortolim tuzo*

(Fernandes 166)

In a subtle manner, this song shows a sympathetic shoulder to the physically challenged, the despised and less fortunate individuals. It is not likely that any average normal girl would marry a blind man. However, contrary to this, the girl's acceptance may be seen as an act of gratitude towards a man who had helped to succour her from a chaotic and depraved life.

Lack of appreciation and acknowledgement of the talents of children by parents can cause a lot of embitterment and discord. In the song "Vakhann'nni", Alfred Rose sings a telling tale of an unappreciative father who never opens his eyes to his son's spectacular talent of sculpting statues out of rock. He is never grateful and responds negatively towards his son. He pressurises his son to be a doctor and not a sculptor. One day the son makes a stone sculpture of Mother Mary and buries it in his father's fields. When the father finds it while ploughing, he brings it home and praises it as a marvel of art.

Later, when he sees the initials of the son at the bottom of the stone image, he is stupefied and dies with shock in his son's arms. The father had never been grateful and appreciative of his son's talent. The singer suggests that parents should always

appreciate the skills and extra-ordinary skills their children are blest with.

*Avoi-bapaimni apnnachea bhurgeank diunk zai  
apreciasany,  
Dusreank vakhanntat apnnacheank kennddttat,  
bhurgim bhogtat fugasany,  
Zor tor vakhann'nni nam, urba kirlonam, chepon veta  
okasanv,  
Hich istor pai-putachi, istor vakann'nniechi, maim-  
paik ek borem lisany*

(Verdes 190)

In the above lines, Alfred Rose recommends that parents need to appreciate their children for the little talents they display, instead of comparing them unfavourably with other children. If there are no compliments and appreciation, then the children become unenthusiastic and give up their inner drive to perform well in life. This story in fact becomes an eye-opener for several parents who never appreciate their children.

Gratitude is also seen in a subtle way in “Sukh Ailem”, where the singer is a youth who is overjoyed at passing his B.A. examinations. He sings jubilantly about his success and mentions the joy which his mother will experience over his triumph.

*Hoi! Maim khuxenuch bhorteli,  
Vengenuh mhaka dhorteli  
Sezariak apoiteli, Devak argam diteli....*

(Fernandes 147)

At every happy occasion in Goa, the elders in particular, remember to thank God. The mother's response too is similar. In his days, it was indeed a grand feat to have passed one's graduation. Higher education was the privileged prize of a few fortunate individuals. In fact, even among those who answered their graduation final exams, very few managed to clear them. It

is here that the mother's expression of gratitude becomes a positive expression of one's blessed experiences.

## 2.4 Songs Censuring Gossip-mongers

Alfred Rose was sensitive to the malaise of grape-vines and gossip which was a usual feature of social life. He had seen how character-assassination ruined individuals and their families. It was time, he thought, to do some social-awareness about damage caused by gossip.

One of the note-worthy songs he wrote in this context is "Gozali", which literally means 'idle talk'. In this song, Alfred Rose indicates how people need no specific reason to gossip. For idle malevolent minds, everything and anything is gossip material. If we dress well or wear tattered clothes, the mouths wag and gossip. They gossip if you have too many children or have none. Gossip is rife when there is dowry brought in or when there is a family function. The singer questions the very purpose of such behaviour which serves no benefit to the doer. In fact, it harms the reputation of both the victim and the perpetrator, and gives rise to unnecessary prejudices. The damage done by indulging in gossip is beautifully summed up in the below lines:

*Gozali zaun asat jevonn kitlea mon'xanchem.  
Gozali korun padd ghaltat kitlea zonnanchem.  
Tankam matui poddonknam aplea ghorabeanchem.  
Dusreacho abru chorun pott tim bhortat apnnachem*  
(Verdes 71)

Gossip seems to be the life-line of many insensitive souls who have no qualms about ruining the reputation and social-esteem of others. It's like fodder to their lives which keeps them sustained and happy to see evil happen to others. They try to ruin the respect of others and make a quick buck surreptitiously. Alfred Rose through this song succinctly suggests that we have to beware of gossip-mongers.

Incidentally, Alfred Rose also composed an English song

“Gossip” on the same theme, which has got a few lines penned in Konkani. This again was a powerful message to hit out against the vile and virulent gossip mongers. He brings the wise tit-bits of his grandmother and shows the irreversible damage done by the wicked wagging tongue:

*Xamaim mhaka sangtali, aiz kam' nam zalear  
mhunnttali,  
Tuji skirt tum pinz ani porot ti xinv, oxi xikonn mhaka  
ditali,  
Sonvsarant konn ravanck yeunk nam, faidonam korun  
gozali,  
Achio khobro taka, tachio khobro haka oxem korchem  
nhoi mhunnttali.*

*Gozali, gozali gozali sogleancheo,  
Gozali, koslea faideacho,  
Ye Ye Ye Gozali, gozali, gozali sogleancheo,  
Gozali infernan vorpacheo*

(Verdes 70)

The commandment of God says: 'thou shalt bear no false witness against thy neighbour'. Gossip-mongers go against this commandment and hence, Alfred Rose in the above lyrics says with certainty *Gozali ifernan vorpacheo*; gossip leads a person to the furnace of hell. Being a sin, it leads the doer to his doom.

“Sogleanchi Izzot Kaddchi Nhoi” is another song which immediately comes to mind here. The lyrics talk about the experiences of the singer in Kuwait where he met several women who were victims of slander back in their villages. The gossip-mongers never understood the compelling circumstance which made these women leave their families behind and embrace a life of hardships and solitude sans family. And the wagging tongues back home would make tall tales and allege that such women were living a promiscuous life of 'mauza' or 'fun' in the Gulf:

*Kuwait vethoz feliz zatoch,  
Lok mhummonk laglo — “Kuwait manza marla  
Panch bhurgeanchi maim*

(Fernandes 2018)

There is also a mention of a young girl in the same song who raised her impoverished family by enduring several hardships in Kuwait. Not a soul helped them in their dire need when all their finances were drained out over her mother's illness. The girl worked hard and provided for the education of her brothers. She alleviated the financial burden of the family and restored stability. But the jealous people could not bear to see such prosperity and gossiped unscrupulously. They slandered the girl with illogical abuses saying that she was in some illicit business making good money.

*Kuwait vochon bhavank xikole  
Mainche alaval unnem zale,  
Tori krunatte monis taka mhumnonk lagle  
“Poi cheddivan mouza marun chuddu kele ...”*

(Fernandes 2018)

The song is hard-hitting and gives a slap to the gossip-mongers who slander and hurl gossip, totally insensitive to the damage caused to the reputation and name of the innocent victim. Many women have braved such slandering tongues and have brought a lot of prosperity to their homes by working in Gulf countries. The wagging boneless tongue can cut a person's reputation to smithereens. *Hadd nasleli jib zai toxi katorla*. Nobody bothers to find out the truth behind the behaviour. Nobody sees the good behind the illicit or unusual behaviour. Yet, we cannot generalise about people. Alfred Rose is being quite realistic here. It is only because of a few bad mouths that the name of the family or community gets ruined. Hence, it is always best to stay wary of gossip and gossip-mongers.

A similar theme is also explored in the duet “Khobro”, where the couple compare *khobro* or gossiping to a raging fire which

mercilessly consumes. Originally sung by Alfred and Rita Rose, this interactive duet uncovers the harsh ill-effects of gossip. In fact, this song is a dig at loose tongues who spread rumours that they had separated. There was another grapevine in Calcutta that Alfred Rose was no more. All envy, rage and bitterness were teeming through these rumours. So, the duet-singers aver:

R: *Konnem doudirean lailo zait ho uzo  
Soglleak fankarla atam paloum nezo*  
A: *Tem nhoinchem tondd ani mon'xachem tondd  
konnacheanuch bond kori nezo  
Kitle ghorabe hulpoleat lagon khobrancho uzo*  
(Fernandes 127)

They also clarify the falsity behind such unconfirmed rumour mills. They are specifically targeting two rumour-mongers. And in true Christian faith, the couple through this song turn the tables and bless these two gossip mongers.

*Dog khobro kortoleank Dev borem korum mhunnttanv  
Khobro sot mandtoleank Dev borem korum mhunnttanv  
Ami famad asleanv, khobro korun odik famad zaleanv  
mhonn upkar mandtanv  
Sotmandunk nam tankam-i,  
Dev borem korum mhunnttanv*  
(Fernandes 128)

Irony is rife through the above lines as the couple claim to have reached the zenith of fame, more so due to the 'town criers' who made them hit the headlines with their loose talk (khobro). Thus, the title "Khobro" is apt and gives a moral lesson to all who indulge in malicious idle talk.

## 2.5 Celebrating Honesty, Fidelity and Friendship through Song

Among the several good values stressed by Alfred Rose in his Konkani song lyrics, honesty, friendship and marital fidelity

stand firm and upright. In an overt or subtle manner, his songs narrate events and incidents in the lives of common people which celebrate these three values.

“Sorop Garsuleam Dolcancho”, is a thought provoking song which centres round the dishonest ways of men to loot and plunder. The light-eyed snake is a symbol of distrust. The song tells the tale of a family who leave their house key with the neighbours and proceed for a holiday. While on their holiday, the neighbours have a visitor who asks for this house key in order to deliver a cupboard which the owners had apparently ordered. The key is handed over and the cupboard is delivered. However the very next day, the furniture carriers come over to say that it was a mistaken delivery. They apologise and ask for the keys to take the cupboard back. The innocent neighbours oblige.

However, when the owners come back and enter the house, they realise it was ransacked. All their precious belongings were missing. The singer beautifully says that the cupboard had a snake with light-eyes who entered the house and swiped it clean over-night. The next day the things and snake escaped as they were hiding inside the cupboard. The singer warns the listeners in the last stanza to beware of such ‘snakes’ who are wriggling loose in society. They steal, plunder and at times even kill.

*Sambhallat bhoinnimni tumchi ghoram,  
Konnakuch ugtim korinakat daram  
Sorpamni bhorleat vadde toxim xaram  
Te khaun dovortat haddam  
Zaum xaramni, zaum ganvamni sorop choddzaleat.  
Flettamni yeun chorio korun jiv gheun geleat...*

(Fernandes 164)

Dishonesty, burglary and thieving are endemic in a materialist society which is greedy for money. Alfred Rose uses the medium of drama and song to create awareness and vigilance. From stealing material things to infidelity in relationships, the themes in his songs are varied.

In the duet by Alfred Rose and Rita Rose “Fotoilem Deva Fotoilem”, the two characters are contemplating on settling in Simla for better prospects. The theme is fidelity and the threat of living apart. The newly-weds, Kamla and her husband are in a dilemma. The husband has got a new job in Simla and has to relocate there. However, initially he has to go alone to find accommodation and settle his life there. She is apprehensive of him being alone as he may fall in love with another beauty *mennanchi bauli*, like a pretty wax doll. This duet using an *Antruzi* dialect hints at the dwindling marital fidelity particularly among newly-weds. And the chorus/ *dulpod* resounds:

*Fotoilem Deva mhaka sap fotoilem*  
*Lognak voros zaunk nam eksurponnant bosoilem*  
(Fernandes 103)

Alfred Rose through these lyrics is suggesting that, for love and friendship to blossom in the life of a married couple, it is essential that the couple live together. Most marital problems stem from the fact that the couple have never lived together due to several economic, social and personal reasons.

Marriage is a sacred covenant and cannot be treated like a whimsical contract. The couple should understand the responsibility which comes with this sacrament. It is better to be honest and refrain from marrying than to marry and ruin the life of one's spouse. Inspired by a real-life incident which happened in Saligao, in “Kazar Zainam”, the groom Christopher who is about to utter the sacred vows at the altar for his nuptials is left stupefied as the bride Gloria does not give her consent for the marriage. *Nam hanv tache lagim kazar zainam...* is her shocking response. The groom, his family and the entire congregation is left dumb-founded and the bride makes an exodus from the altar in front of the priest who begs her to re-consider.

After this embarrassment, Christopher confronts Gloria to know the reason behind her behaviour. The girl confesses that she was in love with another man and she was forced to marry under

parental pressure. She would never be able to stay faithful to the marriage. She wants to be honest and sincere to her true love. Though heart-broken and humiliated, Christopher understands her predicament and they both declare that marriage is a commitment which should never be forced upon by parents. It can ruin couples and families at large. The last stanza sung by both is actually the voice of Alfred Rose:

*Kitlim cheddym, aiz rodditit diukamni  
Forsan kazar keleant tanchea maim-painim.  
Aplinch fulam pisddun uddoleant kitlea avol-  
bapaimni.  
Bhogxi mhaka/tuka, mhojem jivit bhorlem  
kanntteamni*

(Fernandes 125)

The need for a man to embrace the virtue of marital fidelity is explored very wittily in "Janet ani Linet". The married man who sings this song has his wife in Goa and hopes to have a child. But in his office and bus there are two women, Janet and Linet, distracting him with mini and maxi skirts respectively. They think he is an eligible bachelor and the situation is seemingly enjoyable to the man. However, he offers a novena for obtaining the favour of a child and decides to call his wife to Bombay. He is exasperated with pretences and wishes to be true to his spouse.

*Eklem-i sanglear aikonam, atam kitem hanv kortolom  
Odik borem atanch hanv bori hikmot kaddtolom  
Bailek Bomboi haddtolom, tankam introduce hanv  
kortolom  
Ti mini skirt mhaka naka, maxi mhaka naka.  
Saddiekuch veng martolom*

(Fernandes 118)

For the listeners, the 'mini and maxi skirts' are symbolic of Linet and Janet who are temptresses in the life of the married man who lives in Bombay pretending to be an eligible bachelor. The last

stanza brings out his determination to stay firm to his marital vows of fidelity and steadfastness.

Several songs of Alfred Rose celebrate the value of true friendship. A prominent name among them is “Khoro Ixtt” meaning, ‘true friend’. The song is laced with a philosophical tone and questions the very concept of ‘true friendship’.

*Konn zait tuzo ixtt khoro, khorea kallzacho,*

*Konn mhaka zabab di hacho*

(Fernandes 131)

Alfred Rose attempts to categorise the various kinds of friends one encounters. All friends are not genuine souls. Some of them intend malice and harm; some are full of venom and double-standards. They want to sustain friendships to fill their own wallets. These can never be true friends but enemies in disguise. (*He ixtt nhoi, punn dusman tuje*).

Alfred Rose in the latter half of the song elucidates on the meaning of true friendships. A genuine friend will not embrace you for ulterior motives nor get you drunk intentionally, but instead mentor and steer you in the right path. A true friend will advise genuinely, speak about your faults openly and never flatter you for the wrong reasons. The last stanza summarises the theme and outlines the qualities of a true friend:

*Chint, chint, chint ixtta,*

*Ginean ason, xikop xikon, kudd'ddo zaum naka,*

*Aik, aik, aik ixtta,*

*Goroz korta, kopol dhampta, akantak pavta,*

*Vait khottio kornnio tujea zo tonddar marta,*

*Hoch tuzo ixtt vortouta*

(Fernandes 131)

There are many songs by Alfred Rose which briefly touch the theme of friendship. The consequence of betrayal by one's friend is expressed in Alfred Rose's “Bhogos Maka”, originally sung by

Delphine. The girl-singer is asking for forgiveness from her first lover as she fell into the wily trap of his friend and married him only to be betrayed and cheated. She calls his friend a cheat (*footing*) and begs her first lover to accept her in her despondency. She feels enmeshed in his wily net of illusion and regrets her decision. She sings in an emotional and poignant tone:

*Tuje oslem ful nam khuuncheach ghorant  
Tujea amigan dhorlem pagerant.  
Sampddaitem tea kallokhi bhuim-enrant  
Kallokhi bhuim-enrant*

(Verdes 22)

This song subtly hints at pretentious friends who are dishonest wolves in sheep's clothing. Their true colours do emerge eventually and the outcome is disastrous. It is better to be wary and choosy about our friends. True friends always wish good for the other. They are selfless and share a genuine love and concern for the other. It is important for us to differentiate between the genuine and pretentious friends.

## 2.6 Celebrating Love and Goodness through Song

Alfred Rose's song lyrics offer lessons in morality. They create social awareness, sensitize and awaken minds. They sensitize the conscience and make us differentiate the right from the wrong. Previously, we have explored how values of honesty, marital fidelity and friendship are celebrated through his songs. We will now discuss how his lyrics have the potential to spread positive values of love, and goodness.

In "Dizgrass", Alfred Rose puts across a conversation between a brother and sister through this duet. The married sister who was childless had a brief moment in the sun after mothering a child for just twenty days. Her child dies and she is left crestfallen. She is contemplating suicide. But the brother, who seems to be the voice of Alfred Rose, prevents her from taking this drastic step.

*Bhav: Jiv diunk sodi, jiv diunk tuka diunchonam,  
Fulto fuddar padd korunk mevchonam...  
Jiv dixi zalear, poi tuzo ghorkar dusri vhokol hadttolo,  
Rokhddich dusri vhokol hadttolo,  
Apurbayechi eklich mogachi bhoinn mhaka konn  
ditolo...Hai! Rodttam!*

(Fernandes 88)

The goodness in the heart of a brother towards his sister is unravelled through the above lyrics. The brother cannot bear to lose his only sister over a foolish decision.

Love and goodness are also highlighted in the lyrics of “Dogui Bhikari”. This is a choral duet where two beggars are speaking for themselves. They are beggars of a different kind; they are going door-to-door begging not for material alms, but for goodness and kindness. They are not interested in money, wealth or rich clothes. They want brotherhood, peace and true affection and love. The last quatrain of the song unveils its moral message. The beggars urge the listeners to offer alms of kindness, brotherhood, peace and selfless love. So, they sing:

*Amkam bhik ghala re doyallponnachi  
Amkam bhik ghala re bhav-bhavponnachi  
Amkam bhik ghala re sovostkayechi  
Amkam bhik ghala re tumchea khorea mogachi*

(Fernandes 89)

At a sub-text level, perhaps Alfred Rose's lyrics here aspire to instil in bureaucrats, values of goodness, peace, service and brotherhood. Politicians are like beggars who come for votes; it is all for ulterior ends and personal profits in the long run. However, the two beggars in this song are a class apart. They are ideal beggars who seek goodness and love. They even quote Biblical lines:

*Darar marit zalear dar ugodditolem  
Khalteponnan magot zalear meutolem,*

*Amkam zai poi te zai tech zonnank sanglem.*

*Konnach lagim nam astolem*

(Fernandes 89)

Thus, in “Dogui Bhikari”, mendicancy is given a new dimension. There is a need in this world to beg for peace, love, kindness and brotherhood. The song forewarns us to act positively in order to spread goodness and peace in a world which is heading towards discord, war and hatred.

“Nitoll Ontoskornn” is a duet which ignites thought-provoking ideas of the role of a girl after marriage. The boy who is seeking the girl's hand in marriage is trying to test her conscience. Will she treat his mother and home as her own after marriage? As a working woman, will she be able to balance her work and life as a married woman? This street-smart and suave girl has her answers ready. She is working to help her own parents to survive in their old age. Yet, she assures him that she will be a tight-rope-walker and balance her responsibilities with grit and gusto. The boy acknowledges this fact and accepts her as she bears a clear conscience, pristine heart and mind. She assures the boy that she will work in their fields along with his mother. Lastly, she promises him that she would resign from her job and look after his mother and their home.

*Cheddo: Sambhavtolem tor chavi mhojea darachi*

*Kobul korunk tuka sangatinn fuddarachi*

*Cheddum: Bhas hanv ditam, zatolim ghorkarn visvaxi*

*Ti ofisantli sirvis soddun hanv kortolim chakri tujea  
ghorachi.*

(Fernandes 38)

Alfred Rose seems to suggest that a clean heart overflowing with love and goodness can survive under any circumstances. One must be able to have a clear conscience and a will to share, care and bring a change in the society through one's God-given talents. Alfred Rose uses the medium of song and music to do just this! He instils morals and values, educates his listeners on the

righteous and moral path and ensures that his lyrics serve as a catalyst to change the deteriorating values and morals of his times.

Even today, these lyrics are ever fresh and meaningful, overflowing with relevance to our times. Though they were written in the twentieth century for a different audience, the twenty-first century listeners still draw inspiration from them. Every song he wrote has a soul-stirring, moral message and it continues to enlighten, educate and inspire us.





## Religious and Devotional Themes in Alfred Rose's Lyrics

3

Sweet fruits from a tree are credited to the tree's nurture and upkeep. Alfred Rose too had his tender years in the midst of the Jesuits. He was also a part of the Dabul Sonapur Church choir, where his love for religion and devotion to saints was sown. In an interesting interview with Inacio Oliveira published in *Gomantak Times- Zest* dt. 19 June 1988, Alfred Rose was asked whether his songs consisting of high morals and educative messages could bring about a potential social change. With a convincing tone, Alfred Rose replied: "Obviously. One song 'Dotorancho Dotor' has helped many people and they are healed through the graces of St. Anthony..." He went on to give several examples from the feedback he got from his listeners and fans about how his songs instilled devotion, awareness and sensitized them about several social concerns.

Several songs written by Alfred Rose are devotional and religious in theme and tone. Born and nurtured in the Roman Catholic faith, they resound with Biblical echoes as well as seek

inspiration from the divine songs sung in the Church from the *Gaiionancho Jhelo*.

### 3.1 Devotion towards Saints

We cannot draw a clear-cut line of distinction between the devotional and religious divine songs, as the two overlap. The songs instilling devotion in saints have a religious tone and tenor. Let us take the example which Alfred Rose gave in his interview mentioned above – his unforgettable song “Dotorancho Dotor”. From the title, it seems that he will be singing about some illustrious doctor who has a raging reputation to heal and cure patients. But the song is about the devotion to St. Anthony who heals one of his tiatrist colleagues, ailing from the dreaded throat cancer. When the doctors gave up all hope, it was the 'physician-of all physicians' (*Dotorancho Dotor*) St. Anthony, whose deep devotion healed his friend. The song urges the listeners to keep their faith in adversity, high. The singer advises to trust in St. Anthony and in his unwavering faith and participate in the saint's devotion of 13 novenas.

*Tera Novenam tachi khorea bhavarthan tum kor  
Bhavarth kallzant gheun bhitor Sant Antonik fuddo kor  
Sant Anton aiz zaun asa, ek dotorancho dotor  
Hi milagr mhoje thaim ghoddlia, bhavamni ek milagr  
vhodd...*

(Fernandes 95)

“Dotorancho Dotor”, thus sings like a testimony of a miracle which occurred in Alfred's life due to his utter devotion and faith in Christ and his servant, Saint Anthony. Alfred Rose considered St. Anthony to be one of his favourite saints. He composed another song in line with the hymn of St. Anthony from the church hymnal. He named it “Sant Anton” and sings praise to the saint who kneels before the vision of baby Jesus with utter love and religiosity. The thirteen miracles of St. Anthony are glorified through the lyrics and the singer urges for a fourteenth one in his own life.

*Sant Antoni bhokta, o choriam tujim tera  
Choudavem kor bhokta, amchea papia chea ghora  
Bhokta tum amchi kaklut kor,  
amche pasun prarthonam kor  
Deva lagim magon ti vost, kakluti chi zhor...*

(Fernandes 197)

The singer sings his utter devotion to the saint and professes his faith through this hymn. There are other saints like St. Francis, who also have songs written with their name as titles. "Sant Francis" is a song about the popular saint of Goa whose relics are still preserved in the Bom Jesus Basilica in Old Goa. The song highlights the virtues of the saint while the singer asks for favours of good health and deliverance from evil and pestilence.

*Pest piddecho tum adhar amcho  
Adhar soglleanmi sanddloleancho  
Tum rakhnno Jezuchea xelli ancho  
Soglleancho tum aiz bhorvanso*

(Fernandes 202)

Besides professing deep devotion towards the saint, these lyrics also ascertain the deep-seated faith of a Goan who has Saint Francis Xavier as an emblem of his Goan spiritual identity, irrespective of one's religious leanings. Alfred Rose, though settled in Mumbai, was close to the spiritual ethos of Goa and had a deep devotion to St. Francis Xavier. This is evident in the lyrics of the song, which evoke blessings from the saint.

Alfred Rose composed a song in praise of Saint Mother Teresa, much before she was canonized a saint. She was well known in India as an 'angel of the poor and destitute'. The lyrics sing praises to her selfless service to uplift the poor, downtrodden and despised. Her contribution to save unwed mothers from aborting their illegitimate children is well known. The world proclaims her goodness as her service to the needy continues through the homes run by the sisters of the congregation she founded.

*Apunn hea sonvsarant zoddunk  
Vhoddlo man nasli tika axea  
Tori sonvsarant dila vhodd inam'  
Hea vhodd vaurak tichea  
Dublleanchea vontthancher sodanch  
Nanv urlem Mother Teresa'  
Mother Teresa dublleanchea anjea, Mother Teresa*  
(Fernandes 192)

When Alfred Rose wrote and sang this song, Mother Teresa was just a legendary nun who was serving the poor and needy. Yes, she had won the Nobel Prize in 1979 for her global humanitarian services. She was called the 'living saint'. Much later in 2003, she was beatified and in 2016, canonized a saint. Alfred Rose, through his lyrics foreshadows the beatification and subtly suggests that Mother Teresa's exemplary service to the poor, needy and destitute deserves the honour of canonization.

Alfred Rose also composed songs which edified saints such as Santa Rita (St. Rita was the patron saint of his neighbourhood chapel in Carona- Aldona), a name which also happens to be that of his wife. He has also composed a song dedicated to Padre Agnel. Besides, there is another one called "Ojapanchi Jib" which is dedicated to the martyr-saint St. Januarius. Thus, we see that Alfred Rose had a deep respect and devotion to saints and servants of the Lord and did not hesitate to write songs honouring and praising them.

### **3.2 Divine Songs in Praise of the Lord**

As a singer in the Dabul Sonapur Church choir, Alfred Rose was acquainted with several divine songs in English and Konkani from the church hymnals. He drew inspiration from a few church-sung divine songs and began composing his own tunes to match the lyrics of the most contemporary divine songs of his times. At times, he would translate the lyrics of English divine songs into Konkani and retain the same tune/melody.

“Jezuchem Rogot” recounts the miraculous power of the sacred blood of Jesus which is a powerful medium to salvage sinners from sin. The blood of Jesus shed on the cross becomes a symbol of salvation and redemption for sinners. The lyrics solemnly acknowledge the strength and power of the Lord’s blood and also end with the mention of salvation achieved through the Lord’s resurrection on the third day.

*Nirmoll rogot varoun Tum melot.  
tin disamni Tum jivont zaloj  
Amchi soddyonn korunk Tum vaurlot  
Sorginchem sukh Tum amkam soggleank melloj  
Jezuchem rogot, Jezuchem rogot ghottan dita amchea  
kallzamni...*

(Fernandes 196)

Alfred Rose's love for divine songs through his involvement with the Jesuits and the Sonapur Church choir, served as inspiration for writing several religious songs exalting the Lord Jesus. In “Mogall Jezu”, the singer sings of the basic commandment of Christianity, 'love one another as I have loved you'. The Lord Jesus has been our refuge and strength, he sings. He loves us unconditionally; therefore, the Lord urges us to love our neighbours as we love ourselves (Matt. 22:37-39) Jesus himself is an emblem of love. And, so Alfred addresses him as *mogall Jezu* or loving Jesus. This spiritual song awakens our conscience and shows how hypocritically man behaves and displays double-standards. It is not enough to proclaim the name of God and dismiss our neighbour. (Matt. 7:21-23). Sadly, we worship God but disdain our neighbour. We are envious and curse our brothers/sisters. How can one love an unseen God when we cannot love the neighbour, we see every day? So, he questions:

*Deva hany mog kortai,  
Oxem tum mhunnttai,  
Punn tujea bhava thaim kortai nirddukai  
Bhav dolleacher asai, taka tum kendttai*

*Disonamtea Devacho tum koso mog kortai ...*

(Fernandes 198)

Though highly religious and Biblical in tone, these lyrics sensitize us towards moral and righteous behaviours. In Matthew 18:13, the Lord urges us to be like little children to enter the kingdom of God. This thought reverberates in the hymn “Dhakttim Bhurgim”. The kingdom of God belongs to those without sin or blemish; those like little innocent children. There is no distinction of high or low, rich or poor in the kingdom of God. All you need is innocence and a sinless life like little children.

*Dhakttulea bhurgeank mhoje-xim yeum-di  
Sorginchea rajyant tankam yeum-di  
Dhakttulea bhurgeam porim tumi sogllim zaxat tor  
Sorginchea rajyant suvat meutoli*

(Fernandes 198)

Alfred Rose displays a keen interest in the Bible and echoes the same in his lyrics. He sings of God's love, unity and brotherhood. Romans 12:15, mentions about being united in Christ. We are one body in Christ Jesus. Likewise, in 1Cor 6:17 it is mentioned that we are one in the Spirit and Lord. In “Jezu Sovem Ami Ek” Alfred Rose sings about being united in the Lord and Spirit, thus affirming the Biblical quote.

*Otmo dila zonnekleak, ami sogllim ek  
Ginean dilam zonn ekleak, ami sogllim ek  
Soglleank rupnnem Jezuchem, ami sogllim ek...*

(Fernandes 197)

The lyrics of this song are similar to the lyrics of “Ami Sogllim Ek” in the *Gaiyanacho Jhelo*, the hymnal, with a few changes added in. Lord Jesus is an emblem of unity and we have to follow his path. We are gifted with the power of Spirit (*atmo*) and Wisdom (*ginean*). Thus, we become reflections of His unity.

Another interesting and inspirational English hymn composed by Marijohn Wilkin and Kris Kristofferson, "One Day at a Time" is translated and rendered in the Konkani language as "Ek Dis Ekuch Pautt". Though sung with a lot of spiritual fervour, one notices that the melody/tune is retained in the Konkani adaptation. The theme of this hymn is that we need to take it a day at a time with the grace of God. The singer, who is a woman, invokes blessings of the Lord to do her best TODAY, without worrying about tomorrow. This is a world full of malice, crimes, cheating and evil. The singer seeks graces to carry on her daily life, one day at a time.

*Ek dis ekuch paul mogall Jezu  
Itlench aiz zata mhaka  
Di mhaka holl korunk hanvem Tuka zai toem  
Aicho dis gelo, mogall Jezu  
Faleam ghoddye yeunchonam  
Dekhun Dhonia aicho dis sarunk, kurpa di mhaka*

(Fernandes 199)

In a subtle manner, the hymn "Ek Dis Ekuch Pautt", praises and glorifies the Lord for all the blessings He has bestowed on the individual singer. This song becomes an outpouring of praises coming from the lips of a human who recognises her frailties and accepts the challenges of everyday life.

### **3.3 Seeking Mercy and Expressing Gratitude**

There are a few songs composed by Alfred Rose for his tiatrs and musical shows which narrate episodes from day-to-day life and seek mercy and forgiveness from the Lord. Some even express gratitude for all the graces received. The themes are evident in the title itself. Sung by Rita Rose, "Devak Dium-ia Argam" is a song which praises and thanks God for the innumerable graces and blessings received for uniting her with her loved one. She is overjoyed for making the impossible union, possible. She imagines the choir of angels singing and playing as she unites in holy matrimony and sings:

*Anj boddve vazoitat orgam,  
Devak ami dium-ia argam,  
Ek zalim separad kallzam,  
Nastanam kantteachim durgam*

(Verdes 37)

Though not a hymn, this song displays the deep faith of a godly and devout woman who wishes to express her gratitude to God. In “Dhonia Bhogos Mhaka” sung by Alfred Rose, the male singer is again grateful to God for creating him as a normal human with all physical and mental faculties intact. He compares himself to a lame girl who cannot walk due to her crippled disposition, and confesses how he has been ungrateful and complained against God. How grateful he should be! So, he seeks forgiveness and sings:

*Dhonia bhogos mhaka! zaite pauttim xinnttam Tuka,  
Itlem Tunvem dilam tori, mhaka sonvsar dista naka,  
Tea cheddvak sogllench dilam, fokot eka paim-ian  
tontem kelam taka,  
Mhaka don paim dileai tori, kednaim hanv okman  
kortam tuka*

(Verdes 37)

The singer then narrates how he met a young boy with a beautiful voice, but when he went closer to appreciate his talent, he realised the boy was completely blind. Likewise, in the third stanza, the singer narrates of how he met an angelic looking girl with beautiful features. However, she was completely deaf. Alfred Rose through these lyrics makes us realise how grateful we should be to God for giving us all the faculties and creating us as normal human beings. There are so many who are challenged and less privileged, and still, we often complain and grumble. So, the singer expresses gratitude and sings:

*Dhonia Bhogos mhaka, don kan dileai mhaka,  
Don dolle dileai mhaka, don paim dileai mhaka,  
Kan-dolle ani paim nastanam,*

*ti rochnna vakannddta tuka,  
Soglim dennim mhaka ason kednam chukon han-  
okman kortam Tuka.  
Dhomiaaaa Dhoniaaaaa Bhogos Mhaka*  
(Verdes 38)

Forgiveness and mercy are sought by the singer for not appreciating how blessed he is for being a normal human being, with hands and feet, ability to hear, feel, see and appreciate all the blessings in life. Yet, he has offended God and endlessly complained. He seeks mercy and accepts his weaknesses.

### 3.4 Requiem and Solemn Songs

Alfred Rose's deep devotion to religious and devotional songs manifested in the composition of another unique variety viz Requiem and Solemn songs. The most striking examples of each of these are two songs, "Mhojea Ghora Yetam" and "Dhir Adhar Bhorvanso".

The popular English song "Lord, I am Coming Home" by William J. Kirkpatrick, [inspired by the parable of the prodigal son (Lk 15: 11-32)] (1892) is sung during lent and for requiem or funeral services. The Konkani rendition by Alfred Rose is titled "Mhojea Ghora Ietam". Interestingly, this song in Konkani which is inspired by the English, was sung as a recessional song for the funeral mass of Alfred Rose at Mahim Church. Rose's lyrics speak of how man has to return to his final home as a sinner. He asks for mercy and seeks heavenly bliss. It is an eternal life where there is no hunger, thirst or sadness. All he needs to do is respond to the call of Jesus.

*Mhojea ghora atam bhuk lagchi nam  
Mhojea ghora atam tan lagchi nam  
Mhoje pasot konnench dukhi zaunk favo nam  
Mhozo Jezu apoita anik ravonk zainam*  
(Fernandes 201)

The *ghor* or 'home' referred to above is the eternal abode of the

Biblical Promised Land. The singer pleads for benedictions and flowing graces (*kurpechi zhor*). He asks the Lord to lift him up if he has faltered in a puddle of sin and grant him the joys of heaven.

*Mhojea ghora yetam, Mhojea ghora yetam  
Mhozo Dhoni Dev ravta, tachie venget yetam  
Konnuch dukhi zainakat, ghora hanv yetam  
Sogllem sonvsarant soddun, ghora hanv yetam...*

(Fernandes 201)

This spiritual song is a veritable reminder to man that life is quite finite. Man is so engrossed accumulating material wealth that he has forgotten to realise the values of eternal life. And when death suddenly comes, he is compelled to leave all he has accumulated to return to his creator, his eternal home. Originally sung by Alfred Rose, this hymn is a perfect requiem prayer from a penitent who is returning to God's embrace after abandoning a life of sin.

The solemnity of Alfred Rose lyrics continues in “Dhir Adhar Bhorvanso”, which is often heard on Akashvani through the voice of Rita Rose. The popular Biblical verse of Psalm 28:8 resounds audibly: “The Lord is the strength of His people, a stronghold of salvation for His anointed.”

*Tunch mhozo dhir adhar bhorvanso,  
Tuje vinnem sonvsar dukhacho,  
Tunch mhozo dhir adhar bhorvanso,  
Tuje vinnem sonvsar dukhacho.*

*Tunch mhojem khuxalponn,  
Tunch mhojem dhadosponn,  
Sonvsarant nam mhaka dusro konn*

(Verdes 39)

Sung on a solemn, slow waltz beat and sullen minor key, this song surges from the heart of a despondent seeker of solace. Heart-broken and dejected, the singer trusts the creator to give

her the graces to stand firm through adversity. Without the Lord, the world is shrouded in sadness, she admits. For the Lord alone brings boundless joy and peace.

Alfred Rose displays his profound spirituality through the above discussed divine songs. The lyrics are teeming with religiosity and bear the flavour of the singer's devoutness. They are meaningful prayers sung in tune, some being Biblical echoes while others are appropriate divine songs which (if approved) could go as divine songs in the church Konkani hymnal. They are overflowing with the love of God and show his utmost devotion to saints and genuine servants of God.





## Portrayal of the 'Woman' in Alfred Rose's Lyrics

4

Though a man himself, Alfred Rose had deep respect and love for the 'woman' or the 'ladies' which he worked, interacted and associated with. Besides the closest women in his life, his mother Dolorosa, wife Rita and much later his daughter Alria; there were numerous other women who inspired him profoundly. They impacted Alfred Rose's life so much that they made an entry into his song lyrics.

There are several songs composed by Alfred Rose which either sing about women: their problems, their predicaments, their trials and quirks, and even sing praise about their stoicism and daring achievements. What inspired the composer to compose songs about women? Why do women enter his song lyrics so profoundly? Sometimes, the titles of some songs are the names of women. Who were these women? Were they fictitious creations or inspired by real lived personages? This chapter will try to investigate and deliberate on these curious questions.

It was not possible to write this chapter without a personal interview with Late Alfred Rose's wife, Rita Rose alias Maria Rita Fernandes. Therefore, the present researcher visited Rita Rose on 12 October 2019 at her residence in Mahim and conducted a personal interview in order to clarify and verify certain hypothetical assumptions.

## 4.1 Songs Bearing Titles of Women's Names

Out of over seven hundred songs written by Alfred Rose, there are almost one tenth (about seventy) of them which refer to women in a more direct manner. Some of the songs bear the title of a lady's or girl's name. "Celina", "Angela", "Cynthia", "Vilma", "Fatima", "Bela Bela", "Diana", "Janet ani Linett", "Jimmy ani Jenny", "Sandra", "Lovely Esther", "Luiziana", "Monica" and "Leticia" are only a few examples of songs which bear the title of a female name. The curious questions arise: Was Alfred Rose, the composer, associated with so many women? How then did these names appear? Are these dedications to special women in his life?

Speaking to Rita Rose was helpful in this regard. She revealed how her husband would love to interact with relatives and social acquaintances and eventually get hooked with an idea to write songs remotely linked to these women. For instance, Celina was a friend's friend he had met in Margao and the name was quite unforgettable. Therefore, he composed the song titled "Celina" to honour this lady. The narrative in the song about the prone-to-fury nature of Celina which makes the gentlemanly singer throttle his love for the lady is coated with a thick layer of imagination. The La Marina Hotel owned by Mr. Menezes in Margao of its times did exist, and so did the girl's name Celina. It was at the behest of Mr. Menezes that Alfred Rose composed this song where in he mentions the name of the hotel right at the start. However, the incensed outburst of Celina who draws out a dagger in retaliation to the man's accidental spillage of tea on her party dress is all a figment of imagination. In all his mixed emotions, Alfred's lyrics here end on a happy note when the boy

finally manages to gather courage and propose to Celina and she shyly giggles to accept it. The last stanza celebrates this union of 'star-crossed lovers':

*Celina tukach axetalom,  
Celina mogan buchkoutalom,  
La Marina Margao hottelant tuka bhettlom,  
Celina tuzo mog jikhlom*

(Verdes 29)

While the echoes of "Celina" fade away, Rita Rose's father's god-child Juliana comes along to prod Alfie to write a song with her name. And the composer obliges. The song "Juliana" thus draws its genesis here. The singer images Juliana to be a lady he has met in his dreams. He is head over heels in love with her. She haunts his memories and he imagines every pretty lady to be his probable Juliana. He wanders helter-skelter from towns like Panjim-Vasco-Margao to villages in Bardez like Aldona, Britona and even Saligao on the hunt for Juliana, and sings:

*Ponnje, Vasku, tosoch Margao,  
tuka sodunk bhonvlom hanv,  
Aldona, Britona, atam pavlom Saligao....x2  
Sadhu hanv nhestolom, urleat te ganv bhonvtolom,  
Kuddik tras ditolom, tuka sodun kaddtolom...x2  
Juliana, Juliana, tokli mhoji tharear nam, khorench...  
Juliana, Juliana, kednam mevxi Dev zannam.....2*

(Verdes 103)

Entranced by her charms, cupid's arrow has hit him so hard that he now avows to dress like an ascetic and search for Juliana in other villages in Goa. He has lost it all for the lady and he wonders when he will meet her for real. What is quite interesting here is the mention of several names of villages from Goa. The song is not merely a longing to meet Juliana, but a simultaneous possibility to explore the hinterland of Goa and its beauty.

The song "Leticia" is a blend of fact and fiction. The name was

familiar to Alfred Rose who had a neighbour with the same name. He is known to have been her good friend who accompanied her over radio shows in the seventies. In the lyrics of the song “Leticia”, Alfred Rose narrates the love-stricken plight of Joao who was smitten by the ‘Leticia love-bug’. A simple, god-fearing girl, Leticia never knows that Joao is in love with her. So, Joao connives a plan to win the heart of Leticia in a film-like manner. He tells his friends to pretend to abduct Leticia on her way to church. So as per the plan, Leticia is confronted by the dummy goons. Joao makes his heroic appearance and like a knight in shining armour rescues the damsel in distress— Leticia. Instantly, Leticia’s heart is overflowing with love and gratitude towards her saviour. And the last lines suggest a union of this couple.

*Leticia chem kalliz upkaran bhorlem.*

*Joao-an Leticia k vengent dhorlem...*

*Leticia... Leticia... Tum sorgar sorgin chea anjea*

*Tum Ranni, hanv tuzo Raza.*

(Fernandes 148-149)

Through characters like Leticia and Juliana, Alfred Rose has touched on the idyllic image of a beautiful, innocent woman who constitutes a bachelor’s dream. In Leticia’s personality, innocence and simplicity are in copious measure. She can never see beneath the pretentious connivance of Joao to win her heart.

Contrary to the man falling madly in love with the lady, in the song “Sandra”, the lady of Chinese origin living in Pali Hill Bandra, is intentionally interested in the male singer. On speaking to Rita Rose, it was confirmed that this person, Sandra is a fictitious creation of Alfred Rose. She advances towards the male singer, pecks him like a parrot, pinches him provocatively and makes uninhibited advances.

The lyrics used descriptive language to pronounce Sandra. She has chubby cherubic cheeks, narrow Chinese eyes, delicious lips and a flat nose. The man is enraptured by her beauty and claims to

be attracted to her. But he has a problem: adapting to using chopsticks instead of fork and spoon is a challenge! He overcomes it all for Sandra's love.

There is an underlying humour drawn from the fact that Sandra is of Chinese origin. The lyrics are written from the perspective of a Goan boy, and they subtly dig at the cultural specificities of the girl in a respectful manner. Her *ching-chong* dialect, her ferocious nature on being teased, her crimson cheeks and her looks akin to a swallow, are described with zest. What remains in the listener's mind is the final resolution unveiled in the last stanza:

*Sandra o Sandra mhunnttamhanv kazar zatolilm,  
Honeymoon-ak mhunnttamhanv China-k vetolim,  
Porot yetoch Konkani bhasui xinktolim,  
Sonvsar poitolim, Gōyam yetolim, kalchie koddien  
hanv jevtolim,  
Voi Sandra Sandra, Sandra o Sandra*

(Verdes 173)

Sandra expresses her desire to not just marry the Goan boy and take him for a rendezvous to China, but is confident to return to Goa, learn Konkani and accept and respect the Goan culture and ethos. The mention of 'kalche koddien hanv jevtolim' is a subtle metaphoric amalgamation of the Goan ethos in the 'chopsticks-culture of China' thus foreshadowing the India-China unity through this marriage. Far ahead of his times, Alfred Rose's "Sandra" not just celebrates the unique identity of Goan culture, but also the possibility of amity with neighbouring (powerful) nations like China.

In the interview conducted by the present researcher, Rita Rose mentioned how the fad for writing songs based on women's names was catching up with her husband. The ladies would get so thrilled, that they would personally request Alfie to write songs based on their names. One such case is that of Esther, Rita's aunt's sister-in law, whom Alfie calls "Lovely Esther" in his song with

the same title. She is originally from Divar and the rest of the narrative is imaginary. Laced with a Konkani dialect, “Lovely Esther” whom the singer meets at the church feast (*Ugorjhercha festa*) is a suave and sassy lady who steals his heart. She is good looking and much better than Diana, who doesn’t care for him. So, he plans to propose to her and take her from Divar to his village, Aldona. The lyrics begin with an English quatrain where he claims to be sitting in a country bar, with musings of his amorous adventures with Esther. He uses the cha-cha beat for the song which makes it zesty and unforgettable.

*I love Esther, lovely Esther,  
Choltanam sarki ranni kordi dista.  
Piano vazta, amurkench hansta.  
Hany ogich bosot tor, mhakach gheun nachta*

*She's a fairy, walking light,  
Kaim sozmonam, kitem zait.  
Kallzant bhitor, zalia fight,  
Dianak soddun, I'll catch Esther very tight*

(Verdes 124-125)

The mention of Diana is significant in these lyrics. The singer is willing to give up Diana in favour of Esther, as the former does not give him the desired attention. He faces a dilemma (kallzant bhitor zalia fight) and resolves it by choosing Esther over Diana. The question one faces here is: Who is Diana?

There is yet another song “Diana” composed by Alfred Rose. Rita Rose in a personal interview with the present researcher informs that “Diana” was a part of a canto sung for a non-stop tiatr in which both of them were actors. This is a song which is solemn and poignant. The couple has been in love for several years and the male singer had hidden this fact from his parents. Diana’s brilliance overshadows her physical appearance. The singer is actually agreeing to marry Diana and suggests that she should adjust to his family and their ways.

*Devan tuka rupan bhorunk nam,  
Punn gineanan unnem korunk nam,  
Anik Diana chodd temp uronk nam,  
Kallzam ek zatolim bhiyeunchi goroz nam*  
(Verdes 38)

Diana is assured of marriage despite the fact that she lacks good looks. One wonders whether this is the same Diana who appears in the lyrics of “Lovely Esther”. The same Diana who has a place in the singer's heart, but he can give up on her in favour of Esther. But the assumption is just a wild one. Invariably, Diana is a fictional character, a figment of Alfie's imagination. Though it sounds to be a compromise to marry her, Alfred Rose does not sound dis-respectful towards Diana. He seems to calm her anxiety and assure her of his hand in marriage.

Alfred Rose has composed songs on personally made requests too. One such example is the song “Vilma”. Vilma, who was very close to the Rose family, was the name of Souza Ferrao's daughter.(This information was revealed by Rita Rose to the present researcher). Though the name is based on a real person, the narrative within the lyrics is fictional. However, the song lyrics of “Vilma” mention how she was character- assassinated by gossip-mongers as several films were widely circulating about her. The male-singer, who works in Muscat, is willing to come to Goa to ascertain facts before he can believe all the rumours. What is most appealing about this song is that Alfred's lyrics show the male as unwilling to succumb to grape-vines about a woman's character. He wants to verify and ascertain facts rather than go with the tide of character-slaying.

*Muscat thaun hanv yetolom, sot tem poitolom,  
Hanv tuka naka zalear, kuxin sortolom,  
O Vilma, cheddeamni tujim kaddlim filmam,  
Oxem mhonn, chitt boroita mhaka Thelma,  
Hanv yetam sot kosak lavunk yetam Vilma*  
(Verdes 192)

The male singer is highly respectful towards the woman, though in the eyes of society she is defamed and derided. To add injury to insult, Thelma (a common friend) has been writing letters to him, reporting how boys are using Vilma as a subject for their film shoots. Even then, he will not be judgemental without confirming these reports. This song also teaches us a message to be respectful towards women, particularly towards those who have become the butt of innocent ridicule and character assassination. Judging women as loose and characterless without verification of facts is indeed wrong. Men should respect women, just like the male-singer in the lyrics does.

Songs like "Linet ani Janet", "Sydel and Fidel", "Angela" are also instances of songs bearing the names of women. Likewise, "Beatrice", "Bela Bela" and "Cynthia" too are examples of the same. Each song has a tale to tell; they narrate the saga of a woman's life. In narrating so, the attitude of the male-singer too is exposed. Select songs with titles being the names of women are selected to be able to draw the following observations.

- The male-singer is highly respectful towards the woman he writes about.
- The dedication of the song to a specific woman brings the mind-set of a male and his attitude towards the lady to whom the song is dedicated.
- Some of the names are inspired by women who met the composer in real life, while most are fictitious in nature. Some parts of the narratives in the songs are partly inspired by real-life incidents.
- These songs throw the spotlight on the 'woman', her predicaments and the way in which she is perceived in society.
- Some songs are given a humorous twist with rhymes, poetic effects and by using Konklish (a mixture of Konkani with English) to make it entertaining and

appealing to the listeners. For ex. "Lovely Esther"

## 4.2 Woman and the Problems linked to Marriage

Alfred Rose wrote his song lyrics in the seventies and eighties when society was grappling with traditions which were highly patriarchal in nature. 'Patriarchy' is a social system in which men hold primary power and predominate in roles of political leadership, moral authority, social privilege and control of property. The woman becomes 'the other' to the man and is treated with subservience. Traditions linked to marriage where the woman leaves her home and accepts her marital home as her own, are highly patriarchal. Traditions like dowry, dress-code for widows, attitude towards childless women and subjugation of women by their spouses are instances where patriarchy displays an iron hand and leads to the 'otherization' of the woman.

### 4.2.1 Marital Conflicts due to Dowry

A few songs written by Alfred Rose speak about the banality of dowry as being a highly patriarchal tradition, benefiting the male and accepting a price-tag or a bridal-fee over the new bride, particularly in traditional Goan villages. This leads to high stress for the bride and her family members, who sometimes are unable to pay the growing demands of the girl's husband and in-laws.

Dowry is understood to be the 'property' or material wealth a woman brings with herself to her marital home, post-marriage. But over a period of time, the newly wedded bride is tormented over inadequate dowry and the taunts of her in-laws become unbearable. It is thus that this tradition of dowry becomes a bane and torture for the bride's family as well as the new bride.

Alfred Rose was aware of the cruelty associated with the tradition of dowry particularly in the Goan context. Hence, through his song lyrics he makes a reference to 'dowry' and subtly reveals its vicious side. In the lyrics of "Duddu" (Money), he sings of the materialistic culture which springs in every human the avarice for money. In a passing reference, he mentions

how a bride or *vokol* is refused in marriage if she cannot afford a handsome dowry.

*Bailek mhunntat ghov naka nam zait tor duddu.*

*Doth nam tor vhokol naka nam zait tor duddu.*

*Amigak Amig naka nam zait tor duddu.*

*Duddu aslear sogott tuka mhunnot senheoru.*

(Verdes 49)

The practice of dowry is a way of asserting a material price tag for the new bride, particularly in arranged marriages. Alfred Rose used his songs to highlight the problems such a tradition causes to the bride and her family. The lyrics of "Ghovachi Famil" outline the hardships faced by a newly-wed bride who within two months of marriage loses her husband. She faces a lot of scoffs and derision from her in-laws. She is considered to be a misfortune to the marital household. She laments her woes and cries to her brother who feels sorry for her plight. He confesses how he had got her settled by paying a handsome dowry of five thousand, but still the in-laws ill-treat his sister.

B: *Doth diun tuka panch hozar, or'ran kel'lem kazar.*

*Ritea hatamni dhaddlam, chol ye kortam vichar...*

(Fernandes 107)

Dowry causes a lot of strife and harassment to the newly wedded bride. She is harassed for bringing in inadequate wealth and the ill-treatment reaches such a climax that the girl eventually contemplates suicide. The plight of Gloria from the song "Mandovi" is quite similar. She was from a poor family and could not afford dowry and hence she was in a desperate state. Seeing her about to end her life in the river Mandovi due to her inability to find a groom to accept her without any dowry, the singer offers to marry her and accepts her with all her humility.

*Mandovi, Mandovi, thondd varem Mandovichem.*

*Thoim sobit chedдум dekhlem,*

*Perturbar zaun roddttalem*

*Ankvar babddem urlolem  
Tie dothik vilaptalem  
Kalliz mhojem churchurlem  
Kazarachem utor dilem*

(Verdes 74)

It is interesting to note here that the character of Gloria is fictitious. However, the values of marrying a girl without any dowry is something that Alfred Rose personally vouched for. Rita Rose in her interview with the present researcher confirms that in the year 1965 when she got married to Alfie, he did not accept any dowry or gifts from her parents. He was a crusader against dowry and practised what he preached through his song lyrics.

Alfred Rose believed that if a girl is well-educated, she can very well marry without dowry. She can be independent and fend for herself and her family. He echoes this idea in “Cheddo-Cheddu”, a song which clarifies the need to outstrip gender biases, particularly the preference for boys over girls. The sad reality of India where the boys are preferred over girls due to biased traditions like dowry, calls for real enlightenment. The lyrics offer luminous insights:

*Cheddvan S.S.C. kelear zata,  
Typing xikot tor pagar vaadtta,  
Magir kallzak kalliz meuta,  
Ani dothi vinnem tem khopon veta...*

(Fernandes 84)

Alfred believed in the need for women to be economically independent achieved through exposure to education and employable skills. He detested the practise of dowry and outlined its negative effects in the lyrics of “Cynthia”. Here the groom-singer's mother wants him to marry a girl who will bring in a lot of dowry. The boy gets defensive and asks the mother how much dowry she had given to get his sister married. She is stupefied and cannot answer. The male-singer then decides to get married to

Cynthia, sans dowry. However, Cynthia's family is apprehensive and anguished about the treatment (given to her by the boy's mother) after her marriage due to the fact that she did not bring in dowry.

*Khobor hi vhokleger gomli, tanchi tokli firli  
Vhoklechi main m'hunnonk lagli 'Nhoureachi famil  
kasli?'  
Atanch tor nhoureachi main osli,  
dhuvek chodd dukh ditoli.  
Doth hadhunk nam mhonn jiv khatoli,  
dis-rat annem martoli!"*

(Fernandes 85)

The lyrics of "Cynthia" bring out a quasi-autobiographical aspect of Alfred Rose's life. He got married to Rita Rose without dowry and braved a lot of hardship from different segments of society. The last two lines of this song highlight the fact that a girl should be valued for her virtues and positive values, not the dowry she brings along. He urges Cynthia to leave the parents aside and forge ahead to marry him. And then, he will metaphorically sew a garland of her flower-like virtues and place it around his mother's neck.

*Tujea xegunnacho sobit jhelo gunth'ia,  
Kazar zatoc'h toch jhelo vhoron mhojea mamachea  
gomtteant ghal'ia (ibid)*

A similar idea is explored in the lyrics of the song "Vaitt Nodren Pollenaka", where the groom-to-be sings this song and pleads to the modern and rich girl he is likely to marry, to respect his humble family as her own. The haughty girl's rich father has promised them a handsome dowry of sixty thousand rupees (In the fifties, this was a big amount), besides a lot of land and property. The boy, who seems to uphold the values of Alfred Rose, urges her to leave his life if she does not respect his family. He is not bewildered by her prospective dowry and rejects it in favour of the love and goodness of his own family.

*Hanv tuka naka tor sodd mhoji vatt,  
Kiteak bexttench bhonvtai fattafatt,  
Pai tuzo doth dita hozar satth,  
Te bhair bhensam ani bhatt,  
Tuji doth ani bhatt-bhens mhaka naka,  
Mhaka zanvoi za mhonn sangtai mhaka naka  
Mhojem ghor ani maim-pai asat tim tuka naka  
Tim tuka naka tor kiteak tum zai mhaka*

(Verdes 189)

Implicitly, the boy rejects the proposal and does not show greed for dowry, though he is seemingly poorer. He would rather salvage his respect and personal dignity, than lose it over a potfull of dowry.

Such an anti-dowry move by a boy is very rare. It stems from a value-based upbringing which Alfred Rose himself represented. The boy from "Vait Nodren Pollenaka" is saved from marrying a spoilt brat of a rich father who would have tied him up with her disrespectful snootiness after he had married her. This is in sheer contrast to the plight of the boy from "Buzlet Hozar", which outlines the sufferance and agony caused due to accepting dowry to the boy and his family.

In "Buzlet Hozar", the boy has accepted a whopping sum of fifty thousand (an awesome amount in the fifties-sixties) as dowry. After marriage, the girl leads him by the nose and does whatever she wants: never cooks but orders from the hotel, brings male-friends to the house and makes him a 'waiter', treats him disrespectfully and keeps servants to do all house work. She cannot even make a cup of tea or lift anything from the floor. It seems as if she has bought the man with the dowry her father has given her, and the man silently suffers.

*Kazar kazar zalom doth gheun pon'nas hozar,  
Donuch mhoineamnisaiba zalom bejar,  
Dothik bhulon hanv foslom sangtam sobhemazar,  
Sodankal hottelailem jevonn amchea mezar*

(Verdes 27)

The regret of the man for greedily accepting the whopping sum offered as dowry is seen in the aftermath of his marriage. His life is chaotic and he is enslaved by a wife who flashes her fifty-thousand-dowry-trump-card to dominate her husband and live life according to her own terms. The man is reduced to being a puppet at her hands. Eventually, what Alfred Rose projects through his song lyrics, is the fact that dowry is not merely a bane for the woman and her family, but also to the man and his marital life. It is best to avoid the tradition of accepting dowry and marry a simple, not-so-rich, homely and value-based girl with a down-to-earth upbringing.

#### 4.2.2 Woman and Marital Fidelity

Alfred Rose has a well-balanced and judicious approach to the delicate subject of approaching marital fidelity. It is not just enough for the man to have trust and be faithful, but also the same applies to the woman. In his song lyrics, he intelligently braces with the subject of faithfulness in marriage giving the onus to both, the man and the woman, without any gender biases.

Some of his songs show how the woman fears the fact that after marriage, geographical distance due to work and other reasons may pose as a temptation to be unfaithful to one's spouse. In the duet "Chakri Ganvtti Fulanchi", Kamla and her man are having an interaction through song. No sooner are they married, than the man has to leave for Simla for work and leave her behind. Kamla tells him to stay firm and faithful in their love for each other.

*R: Simla vетoch mellot tuka bauli mennachi,  
Atthvonn kor Goyam asa mhonn bhakri chun'nanchi.  
Bhakri soddun chakri korxi ganvithi fulanchi.  
Nokre poun bodolxi nodor tujea dolleanchi*

(Verdes 29)

Kamla's fears are of any naive newlywed woman who fears her spouse to fall into temptation when he is away at a far-off place at work. The picture of a woman being the stereotypical temptress is also subtly suggested in the above lines. The Simla woman is

referred to as the wax doll (*bauli mennachi*), suggesting she will tempt him and mould him with her pretty and fair complexion. Kamala refers to herself as the commonplace girl symbolised by *bhakri chunanchi*, a local delicacy of a flatbread made with ground rice and grated coconut. She fears that he will be lured by the Simla beauties and forget about his wife back home. However, in the third stanza, she plays the trump card saying she is pregnant with his child. This fact will perhaps make the man emotionally drawn towards his wife while working in Simla.

Fidelity in marriage is explored at a new level in “Hanv Tujem, Tum Mhozo”, sung by a girl who has experienced betrayal and infidelity in their relationship, post-engagement. With a lot of prayers to St. Anthony, the couple has managed to reach the altar to get married. The bride sings her struggles and prays that they remain united and committed to each other.

*Mudi ghalun Gulf-ak geloloi,  
Thoinsoir pavon mhaka visorloi,  
Sant Antoni lagim magtoch,  
Novenam kortoch, porot tum amger ailoloi*  
(Verdes 14)

As indicated earlier, Alfred Rose's approach towards marital fidelity is a balanced one. It does not embody gender biases. It is not just the man who is susceptible to infidelity, but there may be cases of women indulging in adultery. The latter case is indicated in the lyrics of “Bailanchi Rit” which overtly digs at the wives of Gulf-working husbands, who sport sprightly paramours in public and thus display marital infidelity.

This song narrates the joys of a newlywed husband who throws a party to his Gulf friends after he returns there to work. During the party he plays the video cassette of his wedding reception. The presence of a coquettish woman, who throws her weight around men while dancing quite intimately, disturbs one of the friends of this newlywed man. A little later, the listeners realise that this woman was the wife of this man who feels betrayed and

cuckolded by his wife back in Goa, who he now suspects with conviction, is living a life of an adulteress. This song brings out a strong message to wives to be faithful to their Gulf working husbands who slog and work hard to earn the bread for their families back in Goa.

While approaching the delicate subject of marital fidelity, Alfred Rose does not chastise the woman or the man. He puts the responsibility of a successful marriage on both, the man and the woman. Thus, his approach is balanced and prudent sans gender biases.

#### **4.2.3 Other Problems linked to Marriage**

Several other problems (not discussed above) need to be deliberated, which foreshadow the woman and her life as a wife, daughter-in law and a working woman trying to juggle with multi-tasking. Marriage is seen with such apprehension as it invites alongside plethora of problems. Adjustments in one's marital home for a newlywed wife, clashes with in-laws, fear of getting married itself due to infamous family scandals, are a few problems encountered by spouses, particularly women, in the context of marriages.

Alfred Rose, through his select song lyrics, is able to feel the pulse of some of these miscellaneous problems faced by women in the context of marriages. In "Chedum Xetkamteachem", the peasant girl Rosemary is a caring and loving daughter to her parents. She has three well-settled brothers who do not support their parents. So, Rosemary takes the challenge to remain a spinster and look after her parents as a working woman. Her brother, who works on the ship, does not send a penny for his parents; the second one is crazy about women in Europe where he lives and the third one fears his wife and doesn't give them any money. So, she dreams to go to Africa and settle there and soon take her parents to live with her. From a humble farmer's family, Rosemary presents herself to be a strong woman who aspires to do great things for her parents, much unlike her brothers.

Nowhere does she talk about getting married, for she realises that if she does, it will leave her parents in solitude.

The song “Chedдум Xetkamteachem” celebrates the working woman who cares for her old parents and loves them despite having well-settled brothers. It looks at marriage with cynicism and shows how we need to be happy about having a daughter in the family. Though it is believed that the boy is the pillar of the family, it is sadly untrue. The girl comes to the rescue of the desolate parents. The last stanza displays an anti-climax where Rosemary aspires to be a famous lady in Africa and her brothers try to reconcile with her. But she would pretend they are strangers to her. Yet, she would never forsake her parents.

*Mhoje irmanv mhaka poun ojap zatalet,  
vollokh dakhounchim nam,  
Mhaka sodunk yetalet, bai mhunntale,  
vollon hanv poinchim nam,  
Punn hanv chedдум tem chedдум modur kalliz toxem  
hanv korchim nam,  
Maim-paik Afrikak haddun Afrika dakhoitolim Gøy  
eksurim soddchimnam*

(Verdes33)

The courage and bravado of the farmer's daughter Rosemary is in sharp contrast to the diffidence of the lady who sings “Kazar Mhojem Zalem”. Soon after marriage, the woman is in an indescribable euphoria where she almost adores her husband. She does not want him to go to work either on the ship or in the Gulf, but wants him to live with her and be with her. The extreme possessiveness of the woman is noticeable in the lyrics of the song. She does not want to leave sight of her husband. She treats him with adulation and sings:

*Tuka hanv soddchim nam,  
Nodre bhair dhorchim nam,  
Bahrain zoddunk daddchim nam,  
Tarvar vochonk diunchim nam....*

(Verdes 108)

The woman wants to literally tie the man to her apron strings due to her extreme possessiveness. This comes as a major problem to a married man who cannot return to his normal life at work. Hence, marriage for the man comes with a load of problems which he has to deal with.

Problems related to marriage can cause several upheavals in the life of other family members too. In "Kazari Bhoinnink Lagun", the young spinster laments the fact that no proposals come her way as her married sister has brought disrepute to her family due to her unsuccessful marriage. Scandal due to the elder sister's marital fiasco, results in a bad name to the family. This in turn spoils chances for this spinster to get good proposals. This song is a duet where a young family friend shows his concern towards the spinster girl due to this predicament. The girl is so frustrated that she intends to join the convent and live her life in prayer and self-denial. The boy tells her that she would be a misfit in the convent as it is a vocation, not a place for spinsters who have failed at getting good marriage proposals. And so, the duet lyrics are in the form of an interactive dialogue:

*AM: -Sang tor atam hanvem kitem korchem.*

*Nak hem addoun mhojem, jiv diun morchem?*

*AR: Oxem korxi tor odikuch nanv ibaddtolem tum ghorchem,*

*Aik sangtam chedдум mhone tum mhojech boraborchem,*

*AM: Kosloch mhozo guneany nastannam hanv hem, bhogtam fugansany,*

*Riti mannsugen vaddoilem diun favo tem edukasany,*

*AR: Kazari bhoinnik lagun, anvkar bhoinninchem, pidd'ddear zalem nanv*

*Bhiyenakai chol bai tuje lagim kazar zatam hanv  
(Verdes 111)*

Ultimately, the boy decides to marry the girl and accept her despite the scandalous reputation of the girl's sister. He feels

sorry for her plight particularly when she feels tempted to commit suicide due to her desperate situation and feeling of rejection. The lyrics of this song showcase the repercussions of marital problems on other family members, particularly on spinsters and bachelors in the family.

Jealousy, squabbles and petty fights over egotistic situations, are typical of marriages. In “Kazar Zauche Adim”, a similar situation emerges in the duet sung originally by Alfred and Rita Rose. The girl boasts of being famous and attributes their fame as a singing couple to her charming ways. The man simply laughs her off and calls her a circus clown begging for attention. But the woman starts an argument showing how insignificant they were before marriage, but due to her talent they are now shining stars. The woman wants to make her husband dance to her tunes, wants to control him and this is unacceptable to the man. He resents her accusation when she calls him envious of her. In the concluding stanza, he brings in the essence of a harmonious marriage where both the spouses have to help each other to grow as a couple.

*RR: Ghovak mhojea nosai zata, chedde bhultat mhonn mhaka.*

*Hanv idea ditam dekhun, aiz vhodd man meuta tuka,*

*AR: Eka-mekak adhar diunk, kazar zal'leanv visronaka,*

*Hanv kazar zaunche adim, mista tuzo xapai, idea ditalo mhaka.*

*RR: Tum kiteak chavvotai, mhojea xapaik kenddttai,*

*hanvem tuka kitench mhunnonk nam,*

*Eka xirlea bhaxen, bestoch tambddo zatai, hanvem tuka okman korunk nam,*

*AR: Tum tujench trumpet vazoitai, hem mhaka matui mandonk nam,*

*Tum vaztai tea kumpasar nachonk, baile mhoje hanvem kapodd ghalunk nam.*

(Verdes 110)

The man is unwilling to be henpecked and a puppet controlled by

his wife. He wants to uphold his manliness as a husband and clearly says he is not going to dance to his wife's tunes, he is not wearing feminine clothing (*hanvem kapodd ghalunk num*). This clearly states the position of a man who is firm and unwilling to compromise on his manly position and virtues. There are traces of patriarchy where the man is not willing to bend on his male-chauvinistic masculinity to accommodate the glam of the growing fame of the woman in "Kazar Zanche Adim". The change post-marriage is obvious and suggestive of numerous complex problems. But the underlying message of the Composer here is clear: marriage needs to be a well-balanced relationship between spouses, where there has to be mutual love and respect for each other. Problems in marriage are manifold, but they have to be countered with tact and prudence, with a perfect understanding between spouses.

### 4.3 Celebrating the Mother and Girl child

Alfred Rose was very close to his mother Dolorosa Fernandes. This fondness for one's own mother is reflected in a few song lyrics he wrote which celebrated the maternal instinct and in general, the mother. The value of a working mother is highlighted in the lyrics of "Familicho Ekvott". The lyrics focus on the need of a contemporary mother to brilliantly balance her work with family life. The traditional house-wife is glorified for lovingly sacrificing everything (time included) for her family. She would sacrifice a great deal to keep the home clean and keep the kitchen fires burning. Alfred Rose satirizes the ingratitude of the children who do not appreciate the sacrifices of their working mother.

*Ek put avoicher ingrat zait tor, avoi dukam golloitali  
Dudan puta tuka vaddoila, vhoi sambhauala ti  
mhunnttali*

*Dis ani rat hea khandar marun, tujem vaitt kaddlam  
mhonn xinnnttali*

*Mhojea koxttancho inam' puta tujem ingratponn  
mhonn roddtitali* (Fernandes 100)

The sleepless nights when he was ill, and the trauma and trials of mothering, educating and nurturing him over the years are all without any price tag. This song in fact opens the eyes of the listeners to understand the immense sacrifices made by a mother for her children. The love of the mother for her children is priceless and can never be measured or fathomed. Alfred Rose celebrates this maternal love in several other songs too. In “Goddxem”, Alfred Rose celebrates mother's love through her delectable sweet preparations like *goddxem*. He compares the fastfood culture of his working wife who has no time to prepare traditional delicacies like his mother. He fondly recalls the love and care poured by his mother by preparing homemade goodies like *goddxem*, *alle-balle* (pancakes with coconut and jaggery filling), *filoz* (banana fritters), *nachnneachem tizan* (millet porridge with jaggery and coconut milk). The composer thereby glorifies the Goan mother and her love poured out through her delectable nutritious culinary preparations and yearns for it when he is far away from Goa.

*Maim kitlinch goddxim kori,  
tea goddxeancho ugddas yeta  
Goddxem, maim kori goddxem, tacho ugddas yeta*  
(Verdes 66)

Undoubtedly, Alfred Rose glorifies the mother and her love for the family in his song lyrics. Besides celebrating the mother through song, he also shows how the preference for the boy child is a growing trend during his contemporary times. Alfred Rose through his lyrics wants to nullify this myth and makes an attempt to show how the girl-child too can be a powerful member of a family. In the duet “Logn Zatam”, the son and mother are having a dialogue after he has introduced her to his prospective bride. The mother discloses her joy of having a prospective daughter-in law who will do all the house work and leave her without any worry. However, the son corrects her and says that in the modern times, the girl is not a toy to be tied and manipulated. She is an emancipated woman who has her own say in every matter. In the course of his conversation, he reveals how the boys

try to be females in order to feel free and emancipated

*A: Gabrum naka sanvsarant hea noulam zatat chodd*

*Cholio thoddio chole zatat, vokhod gheit tor*

*Voizak sangon mhaka mhunntta choli korun zodd*

*R: Bhogos saiba naka baba, cholo ch mhaka vhood*

*(Fernandes 141)*

The mother who was earlier crying for a girl child is now made to realise that whether girl or boy, both are important and equal in the eyes of nature and God. We have to let go of our gender preferences and respect every person as an individual irrespective of gender biases. The girl child is again hailed in "Chedдум Xetkamteachem", wherein the only girl child works and supports the ageing parents who have three sons. The boys show scant concern for the parents, but the girl works and supports them thus showing how the girl-child stands out to be a pillar of strength for the family, particularly the parents. The lyrics bring out this idea with clarity:

*Cheddo zatokoch vor'ran martat tin morann, gharant  
pettlo divo,*

*Chedдум zatoch vunso mhunnttat 'hai',*

*hozar korunk zai, gham' sutt'ita xevo.*

*Cheddo ghoracho vanson, foddu kanson,  
kallzak ghatlo ghavo*

*Chedдум ghorant asot tor, pai-maincho asor.  
bhizoitolem tavo...*

*(Fernandes 32)*

The traditional practise of lighting three fire-crackers to announce the birth of a boy and two to almost lament the birth of a girl is highlighted in the above lyrics. The birth of a girl-child is looked down with disdain and regret as one has to think of building up a corpus for her dowry and marriage expenses. She is looked upon as a burden and hence the boy child is preferred over the girl child. However, the song "Chedдум Xetkamteachem" proves otherwise. The girl becomes a pillar of support and

strength to her doting parents. Despite having three sons, these parents are proud to have a daughter who looks after them with love. Through songs such as these, Alfred Rose wishes to show how the status of the girl child needs to be elevated and respected to bring about an equilibrium among genders sans any biases.

#### **4.4 Woman and Stereotypes**

Women are often stereotyped particularly in the Indian context, where patriarchal traditions intrude every aspect of our lives. The word 'stereotype' in social psychology, is an over-generalized belief about a particular category of people. It is an expectation that people might have about every person of a particular group. In this context, women are stereotyped as weak, burdensome (due to traditions like dowry), dependent on the man, objects of charm and beauty and so on.

Alfred Rose wrote his lyrics in between the sixties and eighties, and was surely affected by the stereotypes about women existing during the times. On one hand, in some songs he tried to break these stereotypes, on the other side, he is only reinforcing them to uncover their inherent fallacies.

##### **4.4.1 Breaking Stereotypes through Song**

If a creative way to bring about a social change was introduced, the use of song to bring a change in the minds of the listeners, would win the prize. Alfred Rose, in his personal life was highly respectful towards women. His love for his mother, wife and his exuberant joy at the birth of his daughter Alria (many years after his two sons), clearly indicates his high regard for the women in his life. Even on stage, he believed that women had to act and be within their limits and tried hard to break all masculinist stereotypes which would demean and disparage the woman.

In the lyrics of “Europai”, Alfred Rose outlines how we all get overwhelmed by the outward charming looks of a woman. A philosophy-filled song, he asserts how the idea of beauty is skin-deep. One cannot be fooled by external appearances but instead,

should look at the values and morals practised by the individual. In a deep deliberative tone, the lyrics of "Suropai" urge the listeners to break the stereotyped notion of 'beauty' and look at the soul of the individual particularly at the time of looking out for a life-partner.

*Suropaye cher tum patiun zaum nakai gul,  
Ti vortonam dusri vost pum hiech zom'michi dhul,  
Kazar zatai tor kadd borea kall za hem ful,  
Tebnanch bandxi tum oritt suropy echo pul*

(Fernandes 15)

By demolishing the stereotyped notion of beauty, Alfred Rose is subtly hinting at proposals which look at the external beauty of a woman. He suggests how we should look at the beauty of the heart and not merely the face. He suggests that we build bridges of inner goodness and beauty to do away with the temptations elicited by physical looks.

In a male-centred world where the birth of a girl-child is considered to be a bane, Alfred Rose's songs come in as a beacon of enlightenment to dispel the darkness of gender preferences, especially at the time of the child's birth. In "Cheddo-Chedsum" the argument ensues between a husband and wife who are expecting a new born. The man wants a daughter, the lady prefers a boy child. The argument reaches a mature climax where the listeners are made to understand how educating a girl child can be a blessing for the entire family and a new generation. Just as a garden is incomplete without flowers, so is a family incomplete without a girl child.

*Zor ek bag panamni bhorli,  
Sangat bagek tie sobai kosli,  
Fulam fultoch bag ti sobli,  
Toxinch ghorabeant cheddum ek doulot vhoddli*

(Fernandes 84).

The stereotyped idea that the girl child is a burden to the family is

put to rest in the lyrics of “Cheddo-Cheddu”. The lyrics implicitly advocate gender equality and dig at those who prefer boys over girls. Alfred Rose is out to show how girls are a blessing to the family. It is interesting to note that the lyrics of “Cheddo-Cheddu” were composed by Alfred Rose when Rita was heavily pregnant with their third child. In fact, in her interview with the present researcher, Rita recalls how she sang this duet on stage with her husband during her third trimester of pregnancy. It was a song so close to them the lyrics subtly anticipated the birth of Alria, their only daughter born after two boys.

The stereotype against women who cannot bear children is brought out subtly in “Dizgras” which literally means 'disgrace'. This is a duet between a brother and sister; the latter wants to commit suicide as she has lost her only twenty-day-old child who was born after nine years. She fears that yet again she will be disgraced as barren by society. The brother's voice is that of Alfred himself who tries to console her and prevent her from taking a drastic step due to social pressures. The intense stress and social condemnation faced by the stereotyping of barren women is voiced out by the victimised woman:

*Bhoinn: Sodd mhaka sodd, anikuch sukh mhaka nam,  
Konn mhaka kenddchonam, konnakuch hanv zodd  
zauchim nam  
Sonvsar aiz mhozo somplo, respetui mhozo ublo...*  
(Fernandes 88)

The sister bitterly laments the disparagement and ridicule she faced as a woman unable to bear a child. At times, it is from within the family: husband, in-laws and then the neighbours and relatives do not spare her. She becomes the subject of their slander and gossip. Through the voice of the brother, Alfred Rose tries to offer solace to the afflicted woman. Indirectly, the voice of the brother is the voice of dissent to the stereotyping of women as barren by society. Why is the man not rebuked for being childless, when sometimes the fault may not be that of the

woman? Songs like these prod us to think and enlighten our thoughts. They help to demolish stereotypes to make the songs respectful towards women.

#### 4.4.2 Traces of Stereotypes about Women

It is very rare that one finds lyrics in Alfred Rose which subtly reinforce stereotypes. However, there are a few song lyrics which subtly reinforce male chauvinism and stereotype a woman as temptress or seductress. In the lyrics of "Apol" (Apple), the story from the The Old Testament, Genesis (1-11), wherein Eve tempts Adam to eat the forbidden apple, is used as a motif to suggest that an apple (from a woman's hand) is a symbol of temptation. The lyrics also suggest that all sin comes in due to the 'forbidden fruit'. Strangely, what strikes us is the fact that the woman here is painted as temptress, from whose hand the apple is given to the male. Hereafter, sin and shame start proliferating in the world. Unknowingly, the woman here becomes the root cause of all these problems. So, Alfred Rose writes:

*Chedde kazari bailank aiz bhulche nasle, ho apol naslo tor zhaddar*

*Dhavui nakxio zhoroun monis jeunche nasle, ho apol naslo tor zhaddar*

*Bailechea kumpasar dadle nach'che nasle, ho apol naslo tor zhaddar*

*Mhatre gupit nodren cheddvank pounvche nasle, ho apol naslo tor zhaddar...*

(Fernandes 146)

He may seem to blame the apple, but it is the woman who is pictured as the Eve, stereotyped as the temptress who lures the man into sin. So, if men have affairs with married women, it's due to the temptation caused by the women (*Chedde kazari bailank aiz bhulche nasle, ho apol naslo tor zhaddar*). Or men who dance to the tunes of women as if controlled by strings, are all enticed by the temptress. (*Bailechea kumpasar dadle nach'che nasle, ho apol naslo tor zhaddar*). Hence, the stereotyping of women is implicit here.

Likewise, in the lyrics “Janet ani Linet”, we see how the two women are portrayed as seducers, trying to lure the man in their wily charms. The singer is a married man working in Mumbai. In his office Janet tries to entrap him with her seductive charms; she wears mini-skirts, attractive make-up and tries to attract his attention. Linet on the other hand, is a girl who wears a maxi-dress and tries to woo him while travelling in the bus. She too tries her charming ways to seduce the man. The lyrics clearly stereotype these two women as seductress and temptress.

*Eklem mhunntta mudi ghal, dusrem mhunntta vegim  
dovor kazar,  
Yeta titlio modi kortat, mhaka bhulounk sodtat, sangom  
nezo tanche tal,  
Tambdde korun donui gal, dogaim polleunk distat  
Carnaval,  
Kamancherui mon lagonam, ratchi nhid poddonam,  
borem vechem nam hem fal.*

*Honeymoon-ak Europachea ganvamni vochonk Janet  
chint'ta,  
Chondrimant vochpachim chintnam Linet sopneta,  
Hai ofisan Janet naddta, bosint Linet mhaka  
ghunvddaita,  
Kalliz hem voir sokol zata, jiv abalar zata dolleancher  
kallokha yeta*

(Verdes 100)

One can notice how Alfred Rose portrays the man as a victim to the two women's seductive manoeuvres. The man does not care to disclose to the two women that he is already married. Expressions like 'mhaka bhulounk sodtat', 'Janet naddta', 'Linet mhaka ghunvddaita', are clear indications of how the male writer is unwittingly making the two women (Janet ani Linet) as seductive beings or temptresses. However, the redeeming grace of the song is the final resolve of the man who decides to put everything to rest and invite his wife to Bombay to live with him so that both the temptresses could be put aside in favour of his

own wife. He uses creative metaphoric lines like *Ti mini skirt makanaka, maxi makanaka, saddlekuch veng martolom* (Verdes 101). He does not succumb to the temptations, but resolves to be faithful to his wife. This is so typical of Alfred Rose himself. Despite all temptations, he stays firm in his love for his wife Rita Rose. However, these are only a few stray instances where Alfred Rose unknowingly stereotypes the woman as temptress or seductress. Overall, he is highly respectful and dignified towards his treatment of women.





## Multiculturalism in Alfred Rose's Lyrics

5

**I**t won't be untrue if one calls Alfred Rose a globe trotter. He travelled to several continents and places, ranging from Africa, United Kingdom, America, Canada, Germany, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and even Beirut. In their trip to the Holy Land, he visited Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth among other places. In *Alfred Rose—The King of Melody*, the author Isidore Dantas has dedicated an entire chapter viz. "Pordesant Bhonvddi ani Tiatr", to the travel experiences of Alfred Rose due to his several musical shows and tiatr performances. Rose worked in City Bank Abu Dhabi, in-charge of the Bills Department for many years. He was invited by the Diaspora Goans settled in varied places all over the globe, to perform in Konkani for their events and shows. In turn, Alfred Rose assimilated several cultural influences which permeated his song lyrics and made them celebrate multiple world cultures and influences. Thus, the term *multiculturalism* is used to celebrate the traces of world cultures (impacted by his globetrotting) in his song lyrics.

## 5.1 Celebrating Africa through Song

In one of his writings published in *Sot Ulei*, documented in Dantas (2019), Alfred Rose confesses how the very first time he travelled by flight on 27 April 1960, was his flight to Africa on Air International Super Constellation. He narrates how the journey seemed unforgettable and memorable. He was travelling with his entire troupe to Nairobi to perform in a *tiatr Amcho Ganv*. After the performance, the audience members came in to meet the cast. It was a realisation that they had left an indelible imprint on the hearts of Goans in Africa.

Africa indeed had impacted the creative genius of Alfred Rose. He interacted with Goans from the local clubs: Santa Cruz Club, Nairobi Goan Institute, Nairobi Tailor's Society and visited several places of historic and cultural importance in Africa.

This exposure to the hinterland of 'The Dark Continent', left a lasting imprint on Alfie's mind.

One can see the impact of his visit to Africa in the song lyrics he wrote. The lyrics of "Kampala" are quintessentially inspired by Africa. Flanked by Lake Victoria, the city of Kampala (capital of Uganda) is rich in history, culture and heritage. An erstwhile British colony, Kampala is well known as 'the city that never sleeps', where being bored is seldom an option. Charmed by the beauty of this capital city, Alfred composed a song where he is wooed by the beauty of the city as well as a ravishing Cinderella. He compares the girl to the dahlia flower, who comes to him like a flash of lightening. He is allured by her angelic personality and has lost his mind over the lady from Kampala.

*Kampala, Kampala, Kampala  
Thoim mevlem mhaka ek Cindrella,  
Roxroxit dalia, eklench sorga tholla,  
Mevlem Kampala, Kampala, Kampala....*  
(Verdes 106)

At a sub-textual level, one can see that Alfred Rose's love for the

city and the love for the beautiful Cinderella from Kampala are juxtaposed. The lady in an implicit way represents his charm and unforgettable memories of Kampala. So, the lovely things he says in the song about the lady are in fact a tribute to the city of Kampala-Uganda in Africa.

The question arises: Who was this lady? Rita Rose in her personal interview with the present researcher disclosed that on his visit to Africa, Alfred Rose had an innocent-looking girl to attend to the artists. As per the information he disclosed to Rita Rose, this girl was the inspiration behind the lyrics of Kampala. Cinderella is a fictitious name, but the inspiration is based on reality.

In “Nhoureancho Balchanv” sung by Rita Rose, the spinster singer is looking out for prospective grooms to marry. Each of them is a hilarious sample: the first one stammers miserably, the second one is an ugly looker (*ximbro*), while the third one is a paunchy man and looks like a wild gorilla from Africa. It is here that the image of Africa being a place for wild animals draws an allusion.

*Tisro nhouro ailo saiba vhoddlea pottacho,  
Gigantt koso Gorila diso Africacho,  
Taka polleun, saiba jiv kamponk laglo mhozo,  
Choutho nhouro pounk diso pai sotra zonnancho*  
(Verdes 154)

The mention of the man looking like a gorilla from an African wild life habitat draws a picture of Africa which is rich in wildlife and exotic fauna. Similar allusion to Africa and is also seen in the lyrics of “Konkani Visronk Nam”. In this song a Goan girl who has travelled the world (including Africa) is trying her stint as a tiatrist. This is a duet where the male singer tries to test her skills at speaking Konkani and she tries her best to meet his expectations. She boasts about her erudition and her family's status and uses a heavy English accent which draws the humour in this song. But this demeanour fuels the ire of the boy who

cannot digest the fact that this Goan girl has forgotten Konkani after having travelled the world. So, he sings:

*Africa-ktum Swahili bhas uloitalem  
Arbia-ktum Arbi bhas uloitalem  
German-ak tum German ni uloitalem,  
Konkani koxi visorlem...*

(Dantas 24)

This happens to be a case of Goan diaspora who has lost its proficiency in speaking Konkani, but the love for the language and land is intact. The mention of Africa and its local Swahili language bring in the entire emigration history of Goans in Africa and their amalgamation of cultures therein. For work or career, several Goans settled in Africa and then later moved either to the United Kingdom, Gulf, America or Canada for better prospects.

A mention of Africa is made in "Cheddam Xetkamtiachem" where the peasant girl and only daughter, Rosemary displays utmost courage to look after parents despite having three brothers. The lowly vegetable vendor Rosemary aspires to break the taboo towards farmers and girls and migrate to Africa to settle there with her parents. She dreams of dressing in the African style with curly hair, learn English and travel in a posh Lambretta, thus making her brothers envious of her. So, she sings ebulliently:

*Hanv Afrikak vetolim khoxen bhonvtolim, hat ghalun  
hatant,  
Hem vaskin-polk soddttolim, vistid ghaltolim, choltolim  
hanv jhetan,  
Mhojem kens katortolim, kongre kortolim, ponvchim  
nam hea ordan,  
Magir Inglez xiktolim, letpett kortolim, bhonvtolim  
lambrettan*

(Verdes 33)

The desire of Rosemary is a reflection of the aspiration of several lower middle class Goans of contemporary times who wished to travel to Africa for better prospects. In places like Nairobi, Mombassa, Uganda-Kampala and Kenya, there were distinct Goan settlements. It also reflects the urge in the average Goan peasant to travel abroad and rise to prosperity on the social ladder.

## 5.2 United Kingdom and Europe in Alfred Rose's Lyrics

The lyrics of Alfred Rose absorb several cultures of Asia, Africa and Europe too. London, Germany and the eclectic ethos of Europe makes a noticeable presence in some of his songs. In “Londoncho Mog”, the lady singer celebrates the love of her life which has its genesis in the historic and culturally rich metropolis of London in UK.

*London-cho mog amcho,  
Khoroch to ojapancho,  
Sopnam sopnelimnam monantui chintlem nam,  
Nhouro mellot mhonn London-cho...*

(Verdes 124)

It is interesting to note here that though the lady meets her groom in London and settles there, she expresses a desire to build a house in Goa and come back to her roots to live her retired life with family. Goa still charms and warms her spirit. London seems to be her economic Eldorado, a place where she can earn enough money to ultimately settle back in her homeland.

In our times, Goans making an exodus to London is a ubiquitous phenomenon. However, several decades back Alfred Rose predicted this as if with a great deal of foresight. In “London-che Gøykar”, the lyricist outlines the trials and tribulations faced by the Goan settlers in London. The opening lines starkly try to rip open the prejudices we have about the lives of the Goans in London.

*London ak gelea bogor, London chem sur pollelea  
bogor.  
London kitem poi tem, bhavamni yomonam  
Göykar thoim koxe jiyetat, khorea mogak koxe aetut.  
Tanche modern bhonylea, bogor kollonam.*

(Verdes 123)

We often assume that the life of the London Goans is complacent and full of ease. However, the lyrics of “London-che Göykar” bring out the sordid reality: the couple go to work, the children go to school. There is a lot of wealth, but no love, quality family time is scarce. There is hardly any social life, except over the long weekend. It is a rat-race to earn and then spend. Such is the monotonous life of the average middle and lower class Goan in London.

“London-cho Makodd” sung by Rita Rose, is inspired by a soft toy monkey which was purchased by Rita Rose from London. She refers to this toy as the London monkey (*London-cho makodd*). By subtly revealing the English character traits of the region represented through this toy monkey, the Goan lady shows the cultural differences between the culture of London and Goa. The lady in Western clothes like hot pants and tops, is attractive and seems funny if she drapes a saree. The monkey is personified to be a child and loves the use of makeup (seemingly trying to imitate the stylish English damsels) and displays small chivalry like going on his knees to apologise.

*Mhoji lipstick kaddita ani vontth pintarta.  
Powder gheta tonddak rogoddtta.  
Ragan hanvem kitem-i mhunnnlem zalear, hat zoddun  
dimbier ravta.*

*Dud piyeta mameran, sop piyeta soperan,  
Jevonn hatan diit zalear, kednanch jevchonam, diunk  
zai kuleran*

(Verdes 124)

He drinks milk in a baby feeder and enjoys soup from a saucer. He refuses to have food with his bare hands and prefers to use the right cutlery to have his meals. This shows how culturally different and supposedly sophisticated children born to Goan parents can get over a period of time after residing in London. Rita Rose recalls how this song was a super hit when she sang it for her tiatr rounds with the pretty monkey soft toy in hand. She even recalls how she gave the idea to her husband to write about this soft toy from London.

When the Rose family visited UK and particularly lived in London, it was for a period of three months. Therefore, we see how the city of London inspired Alfred Rose's several songs. The fascinating charms of London also lurk in songs like "Modlolo Khuris" and "Europkar". In the former, a paralysed bed-ridden man laments the fact that there is nobody to look after him in his broken state. He mentions how one of his sons has migrated to London, the second one to Germany, while the girl who had settled in Canada passed away in a tragic accident. Sadly, the London-based son comes to Goa and takes his mother along with him. The man is left helpless and wonders how his wife Rosita too could leave him like a broken cross (*moddlolo khuris*) and move off to London.

*Khattir hanv asam, paim halounk zainam,  
Kainch kori nezo, ghorkarn nastanam,  
London-cho put auchit, ailo chintinastanam,  
Avoik gheun London-ak gelo, gomoinastanam*

(Verdes 131)

Interestingly, for the children and wife Rosita, the migration to London is a joyous occurrence. In sheer contrast, for the paralysed man, London seems like a fearful curse which has taken his wife and son away from him. In the lyrics of "Europkar", a trio which was sung originally by Alfred Rose, Luiza de Saligao and Bab Peter, a Goan boy who has lived and worked in Europe returns home to meet his school sweetheart who is appalled to see him culturally transformed. He wears an

English suit, speaks English and seems to have forgotten his native culture. He calls the *Goan* girl (whom he had proposed to marry since his school days) a local lass (*ganvtti cheddum*) and does not bother about her. He has a bloated ego after returning from Europe.

*AR: Ago chol go konnui tum zaum, konnachi bread  
nam  
Ganvtti cheddvanchi hanv porva nam korinam.*

*LS: Puro puro puro puro Europkar tum vhoddlo*

*AR: are va*

*LS: Gorea choleank bul'lo...*

(Verdes 54)

The Goan Hindu boy Rajaram Shett, has transformed culturally after returning from Europe. The girl hints that he values the white-skin (after coming from Europe) more than his caramel Indian skin. He belittles the girl initially calling her a rustic village girl, but later realises that she is his childhood sweetheart. They finally resolve to tie the marital knot and unite happily as a couple. The end is a happy one, suggesting a union of Goan culture with the European ethos. Yet, it displays the cultural amalgamation of Europe with the erstwhile Portuguese colony (Goa) and the socio-cultural implications of migration. There are several other songs which subtly or rather implicitly celebrate the culture and ethos of Europe, particularly England. One such is entitled "Shakespeare", and pays a rich tribute to the master English dramatist of the sixteenth century, William Shakespeare.

In the duet "Chitt Anastasia-k", the London based Anastasia is crazy about Jerry, who comes to London for a brief visit and then returns to Goa. In his letter to Anastasia, he confesses how he has shrivelled like a drooping flower after he left London and returned home. Anastasia wants to re-unite and marry Jerry, but lays down several conditions. She wants him to settle down in London with her. She wants to live an opulent life in London with him. So, they converse and sing:

RR: *London-ak tum yetai zalear hanv kazar zatam,  
Kazar zaun hangach ravtai tor hanv kazar  
zatam,*  
*Negos Gōyam bond kortai tor hanv kazar  
zatam,*  
*Hanv sangtam tem aikotai tor hanv kazar  
zatam,*

AR: *Anastasia ragar zaum nakai,  
London-ak hanv yenam mhaka ravanakai,  
Itlean hi chitt sompoitam Anastasia Goodbye*  
(Verdes 34-35)

London seems to have had a mesmeric charm over Anastasia, but the Goan ethos in Jerry is unwilling to relent. He politely apologises and walks off from the relationship. He is unwilling to settle with her in London as a henpecked spineless husband. He refuses to accept her conditions and tells her to move forward in her life without waiting for him. He will neither compromise his Goan values nor his personal dignity and finally gives up on his childhood sweetheart with a heavy heart.

Anastasia is a character inspired by a real-life person with the same name. In 1979, Alfred Rose visited London for the first time on the invitation of Mr. Jerome Mendes. Anastasia was the wife of Mr. Mendes. Rose used her name and composed this song based on imaginary incidents. Though it was a break-up song, it was his way of expressing gratitude to his benefactors.

Thus, we observe traces of European influences on the song lyrics of Alfred Rose. The visit of the family, particularly of Alfred Rose and his troupe to UK in the eighties (owing to the invitation by Antonetta Fernandes and her daughter Genevive), was greatly instrumental in inspiring these song lyrics. The stories narrated are realistic and inspired by real-life incidents he had personally witnessed. They are not purely biographical, but have a blend of fact and fiction. They mirror an ever-evolving Goa which was getting greatly impacted by European diaspora influences, migrations by becoming Portuguese nationals and at

times completely settling in London or other parts of the European Union. Interestingly, it foreshadows the cross-cultural emigrations to London (U.K) and the craze for settling in Europe for better prospects by thousands of Goans till present times.

### 5.3 Tracing the Middle East and Gulf influences in Alfred Rose's Lyrics

The Middle East, Beirut and Gulf (Bahrain, Dubai and Kuwait) was like a second home to the Rose family. The family resided for two years in the Gulf and another two years in Beirut. For quite some years, Alfred Rose worked as a banker in City Bank, Abu Dhabi. His several years of stay there as well as his voyages to and fro (to the Gulf) for trair performances gave him rich experiences to shape some of his songs. There are quite a few songs which echo the experiences of Goans living in Kuwait and other places in the Gulf. "Agent Fotkire" is a poignant duet where an innocent Goan woman is duped by the agent who brought her to Kuwait for employment. On reaching Kuwait, she realises how terribly she is duped. Not only was the salary a pittance, but also the conditions of work were atrocious. She was treated like a prisoner, not as a respectable employee.

RR: *Kuwait thaun thoddeu tempan, Beirut mhaka  
haddlem vaurak,  
Chear mhoine pag diunk nam, bhair soronk  
dinam ekai vorak.*

AR: *Hem ghoddta zaiteanch zonnank, magir  
xinnttat Indian serkarak,  
Serkar koso yetolo sang tumchea adharak  
(Verdes 5)*

This song lucidly portrays the harsh reality of the Gulf Goans, particularly women. They are duped by malevolent agents and it takes a while to register themselves in their Employment exchange and get their grievances redressed. However, the mention of Beirut too is significant. Infact, this song was inspired by real life incident of a Goan lady met by Alfred and Rita Rose at

the Beirut Embassy. She narrated her tale of being duped by the conniving agents. Alfred Rose uses this episode to weave his song “Agent Fotkire”. Moreover, his familiarity with the culture and geography of the Lebanese city of Beirut is also because of his own real-lived experiences. Therefore, he uses them quite confidently in his song lyrics.

“Kuwait Hanv Pavlim”, is quasi-autobiographical in nature and texture. It recounts the realistic life of the Rose couple where Alfred was a banker in Kuwait and Rita was living with her parents in Bombay. Rita Rose sings this song where she narrates the experiences of a Bombay-bred Goan girl in Kuwait. She had landed in Kuwait for the first time after marriage. She dressed in her usual Bombay stylish short attire and was out with her husband in the Kuwait Bazaar. At a point, her husband lagged behind and she was walking alone, swaying her hips, smiling at strange onlookers. A Pathan showed her a few dinars and tried to put his hand on her shoulder and she reacted by slamming him with her sandal.

*Thoim bobav zalo, sogott ektthovlo  
Lokui aslo to dhanvon ailo  
Mhaka polleun to sogolloch ghaborlo  
Ragan mhunnonk laglo:  
Tum mottvem nhestai, firgojent distai,  
Choltanam bhendd moddtai, rosto pintartai  
Konnakui hanstai, magir bobo martai,  
Guneanv konnacho... Guneanv ho mhozo...*  
(Fernandes 168-169)

This song presents the cultural gap faced by an average Bombay-bred Goan girl in Kuwait. She has failed to realise the cultural restrictions of dress and demeanour laid down by Arab societies on women in general. The man who misbehaves with her in the market, assumes she is a girl of low repute and tries to solicit her. However, the singer-girl admits it is her fault for not abiding by the cultural norms of Kuwait. The highly patriarchal society of

Gulf countries and the restrictions laid on women during those times, are brought out vividly in these lyrics.

“Bahrain-karachem Lisany” is a thought provoking song which Alfred Rose wrote in order to instil values of thrift and saving for a rainy day’. He observed how people were immigrating for employment to the Gulf and would spend lavishly as if there were no tomorrows. The Bahrain-returned Goan from this song did the same. He was reduced from riches to rags, from a rich Bahrainkar to a debt-laden beggar. He lost everything, including his house and wealth.

*Duddu nam zalear tum konnank naka.  
Bahrain-karachem lisany tuka mhaka.  
Zoddta tantlem sambhallunk visromaka.  
Ek dis upkarot tuka*

(Verdes 16)

The plight of the Bahrainkar gives the listeners a moral lesson to save for the future needs. The temptation to spend what we earn is imminent, but we have to think about our tomorrows. This song also enlightens the listeners about the spendthrift lifestyle of the Gulf Goans and cautions to save.

The different associations with the cultural nuances of the Middle East and Gulf appear en passant in several songs written by Alfred Rose. In “Auv Konkanni Zannam” published in Rose’s *Kantaranco Jhelo-7*, he makes a mention of the girl knowing to speak Arabic while in Saudi Arabia (*Arabiak tum Arabi bhas uloitalem*). The lyrics of “Upkar Naslolo Zalo Fottkiro” published in the same *KJ-7*, indicate how boys flee to the Gulf for jobs and ultimately land there as misfits and wander aimlessly. They take up odd jobs and pretend to be managers, dress like heroes, travel in taxis while seeking good proposals from innocent girls in Goa. After marriage, the girls realise their folly and then it is too late.

*Kuwait-chea ganvamni  
Kitlim Goychim cheddym asat xiklolim*

*Pounk distat kai borim  
Tambddim tambddim birondd peram piklolim,  
Nhour te manager mhonn,  
Somzon babddim vor'ran kazar zalolim,  
Manager khuinche te waiter,  
Thodde bekar mhonn tim chintunk poddlolim  
Arabiak thaun yetat tankam bhulchem nhoi,  
Tim tanchim pil'lam akhkhinch giuchim nhoi,  
Hero koxe nhestat mhonn, te xiknnar mhonn somzochem  
nhoi...*

(KJ-7, 4-5)

This song unravels the culture of lies and pretence put up by wayward jobless Goan boys in the Gulf. The lyricist wishes to caution the listeners about the consequences of marrying without investigating the background of the boys working in the Gulf.

Life in the Gulf is not a bed of roses. The men have to make numerous sacrifices to survive. They leave their families back home in Goa and try to make a life for themselves in the Gulf. They brace temptations and expose their wives in Goa to a life of loneliness and more temptations. This is well explicated in “Bailanchi Rit” sung by Alfred Rose. (Alfred Rose had sung a few songs composed by others on invitation)

*Thodde Gulf-ak vetat, bail bhurgeank aplea diunk sukh,  
Punn bailo chint'tat ghov Gulf-ak, roitat mhonn duddvanche rukh,  
Dusrim konn mhunnttat, ghov aplo abgottir chief cook,  
Chintinant tem diunk apnnak sukh, ghov kosle kaddttat tem dukh*

(Verdes17)

This song narrates the saga of one of the Gulfie Goans who realises that his wife is having an extra-marital relationship. The trend of families breaking up due to the geographical distance of the spouses is one of the reasons the lyricist mentions for the

discord in marriages. Without honesty and faithfulness in a marriage, there is no purpose of family life. Though the Gulf may seem as a bright possibility for economic amelioration of Goan families, the reality is different. The women think that their spouse is minting money there. In fact, the men undergo a lot of suffering and strain in order to survive in the Gulf. The reaction of local middle class Goan girls to Gulf-returned bachelors is one of awe and delight. The lyrics of "Bottatanchi Bhaji" subtly highlight this fact, in passing. A young spinster goes to the Mapusa Friday market to sell potatoes (*bottatte*) and is delighted and excited to see how young boys hover around her. Particularly she is thrilled over the interested customers from Bahrain and Kuwait.

*Sodanch hany Mhapxream bazarant vochon bostam.  
Bahrain-kar mellot zalear 'kuch' korun hanstam.  
Kuwaitk-ar mellot zalear besttinch hany loztam.  
Ani tanchim bolsam hany hikmotin pustam*

(Verdes 26)

The preconceived ideas that Gulf-returned Goans are loaded with money is confirmed here. The last line which states that the girl is able to use her charming feminine ways to lure her Gulfie-buyers and sell all her stock itself shows how Gulf creates an aura of glitz and Gatsby-glamour around it.

Alfred Rose was well aware of the reality of Gulf, particularly the Kuwait war of 1990-91. The international conflict triggered by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on 2 Aug. 1990 and its horrendous aftermath particularly for settlers working in Kuwait, was something which did not escape Alfred Rose's lyrics. The war crisis is well mirrored by Alfred Rose in the lyrics of "Kotta Kuwait".

*Kotta Kuwait, lok bhirantin dis sartalo.  
Jordan, Aman, Basra, babddo pollon vetaloo.  
Jevnna-khannak babddo vollvollttalo.  
Udkak pasun khoim oronneant, padixer zatalo...*

(Fernandes 132)

The lyrics further narrate the plight of men affected by the Kuwait war that leave all their material wealth back in Kuwait and come back to India like veritable beggars. There is another episode of how the wife of a Kuwait newlywed groom is paralyzed with shock and his father dies with a heart-attack. There is deep anguish and horror in the air. This song gives a totally different picture of crises linked to the Gulf war. It depicts the pity and angst of Kuwait war and its consequences on the immigrants, particularly Goans.

Alfred Rose's lyrics have provided myriad shades of understanding the plight of Goans in the Gulf region--- their work culture, their ethics and lifestyle, their money and morals, the attitude of other resident Goans towards them, as also the Kuwait-war and its aftermath. The cultural web of Goans in the Gulf regions is well picturised in several lyrics by Alfred Rose. Only a select few are discussed above.

#### **5.4 Other Cultures**

A few other cultures besides Africa, Europe and Gulf are also mentioned and alluded to in the lyrics of Alfred Rose. Songs like “Bomboichi Birmotti”, “Kalchi Koddi”, “Sandra” and “Mharekar Obsoyeg”, are select songs which give us a glimpse of Mumbai (erstwhile Bombay as mentioned in the lyrics). “Bomboichi Birmotti”, sung originally by Rita Rose dramatizes the personae of a Bombay bred lass who is suave and sassy, modern and has a lot of young men as admirers. She is in the fray of a prospective marriage and is highly ambitious. She even plans her honeymoon on the moon itself!

“Kalchi Koddi” recounts the delectable memories of apparently Alfie's own mother's preparation of the previous day's dehydrated curry (*kalchi koddi*) specially when the man-singer dwells in his *kudd* (accommodation of Goan village communities in Bombay). *Kalchi koddi* becomes a metaphor for nostalgic Goa-centred memories: cuisine, culture and rustic maternal and homely affection, which is sorely missed in the din

of the metropolis, particularly by Goans working in Bombay.

"Sandra" is yet another song which revolves around the ethos and culture of Bombay. The girl named Sandra, lives in Pali Hill Bandra. She is originally Chinese and the singer loves her for the last seven years. The relationship of a Chinese-Bombay resident with a Goan settled in Bombay only indicates the cultural diversity and multiculturalism of the commercial capital of India.

In "Marekar Obsoyeg", the unfortunate accident in which a bus in Bombay catches fire and all commuters are burnt alive is narrated. It is by the sheer graces of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, that the singer-gentleman is saved. He had missed this bus in Kurla and now realises what fate he would have met if he hadn't. The unsafe condition of the roads in Bombay is implicitly highlighted through this song's lyrics. The culture of capitalism, death due to negligence and accidents in Bombay become the theme of deliberation here. The singer on the one hand is grateful to the Almighty for saving his life, but on the other hand, he is lamenting the loss of so many lives whose bodies were incinerated in the blaze. In a covert way, the song highlights the life of Bombay dwellers, faced with eventualities and accidents on a regular basis...and still life goes on! Bombay is always on the move!

Several places in Goa also figure in the songs of Alfred Rose. Calangute, Anjuna, Miramar, Mapusa ("Mogacho Edu") Vasco, Margao, Aldona- Divar ("Lovely Esther"), Anjuna- Vagator ("Vilma"), Dona Paula ("Dona Paul") and Panjim as Ponje are only a few places which enter his lyrics quite prominently. There are other Indian regions like Simla which figure in too. Alfred Rose had gone for a family holiday there and was quite inspired to feature it in his song "Chakri Ganvtti Fulanchi", where Kamla and her man are singing an interactive duet. He has to leave her for joining his job in Simla and she fears he may fall in love with a Himachal Pradesh beauty there. Likewise, Madras makes a subtle entry in "Aeroplanak Uzo", wherein Alfred Rose pays a

tribute to his Madrasi friend who lost his life in a mid-air plane crash. In a tribute to Mother Teresa, there is a passing mention of Calcutta too. Hence, a lot of Indian regional cultures and places are mentioned in Alfred Rose's lyrics.

Likewise, even other countries like Beirut, Germany, Sri Lanka and Spain make Alfred Rose's lyrics multi-cultural and vibrant. In "Viva La Goa" the singer-gentleman is a foreigner who has come from Spain on a tour to Goa. He narrates his adventures of visiting different beaches, churches and heritage spots in the State. He makes a mention of the Goan women and the lifestyles of the Goan people. What is interesting in this song is the fact that the perspective is outward-in (from the lens of a Spaniard, a Westerner). Goan culture is celebrated from a foreigner's point-of-view!

*All your people in Goa speak Konkani,  
Oh your Konkani is very very nice,  
And your folk dances are many many many,  
And your mando-dulpod are really full of spice,  
Too good Konkani words now I do know  
When I'll get angry, I'll say 'Tujie maim-cho Ghov'....*

(Verdes 193)

Though this is an English song, it is full of humour and rich with the outsider's view of Goa. Goan dances, language, songs and the scenic and heritage locales are celebrated through this song. Even cuss phrases are not spared: notice the use of *Tujie maim-cho ghov*, which can never be translated into English, on the tip of the tongue of every Goan who swears by Konkani!

Ceylon is also glorified in the lyrics of "Foll Gøychie Matiechem", where the life of Rev. Fr. Jose Vaz is celebrated through song. There is also a passing mention of Rome, the seat of the Pope. Hence, there is a flavour of both Europe and Asia in this song.

Despite celebrating so many varied cultures, Alfred Rose eventually celebrates and hails his own Goan culture--- the

*raison d'être* of his own roots and identity! He may have travelled all over the globe and experienced the joys of multi-cultural diversity, but at the heart of all his experiences, he still loves Goa and the Goan culture. The Goan language and lifestyle will always be his favourite as he sums it in the title of his song "Viva La Goa".





## Nationalism in Alfred Rose's Lyrics

# 6

It is unusual to associate Alfred Rose's lyrics with a patriotism or nationalism which we have been used to in conventional terms. This chapter will critique the lyrics of Alfred Rose by keeping in mind the varied shades and types of his nationalism. In order to do so, there is a need to define the term for an added clarity, as Nationalism is understood differently in varied contexts.

### 6.1 Defining Nationalism

Nationalism is a political ideology in a specific context. Wikipedia definition of the term 'Nationalism' would be beneficial for a clearer understanding of the term. It "is an ideology and movement that promotes the interests of a particular nation (as in a group of people) especially with the aim of gaining and maintaining the nation's sovereignty (self-governance) within the homeland ... It also encourages pride in national achievements, and is closely linked to patriotism." The

Oxford Dictionary III (2001) refers to the noun Nationalism as “identification of one's own nation and support for its interests....; patriotic feeling” (496). Very often, exuberant nationalism results in a jingoism which gets unhealthy and detrimental to a democratic and secular social fabric of a nation. Hence, nationalism may be understood as a way of thinking, allowing ethnic or specific human groups the freedom to govern themselves, disallowing control or oppression by others.

## 6.2 Flavours of Nationalism in the lyrics of Alfred Rose.

We may often get confused with Nationalism, despite having carefully chosen the right definition, if we are unacquainted with the varied types of Nationalism. It is argued by several scholars that there is more than one kind of Nationalism. As a part of the official state ideology, or as a popular non-state movement, Nationalism may be expressed along *civic, liberal, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, religious* or *ideological* lines (emphasis added). What is most significant to note here is that Alfred Rose never wanted to claim himself to be associated with any political ideology. In a sense, he was never consciously a self-proclaimed nationalist. However, his high-spirited and animated love for Konkani language and its people (irrespective of divisions like script, dialect, geographies or ethnicities) made him a cultural ambassador for Konkani and a nationalist of a rare kind: one who hoists the flag of Konkani language and culture where ever he went. With a broad and ramified understanding of the term 'Nationalism', it is apt to choose the one that suits our discussion of Alfred Rose's lyrics, as best. We may safely choose an amalgamated definition to understand Rose's nationalism--- it was not merely country/state centric, but it was a deep love and intense affection for the Konkani people (from various ethnicities), respect and love for their diversities and cultural heterogeneity. The Nation and State blur their boundaries in Alfred Rosian lyrics. What is love for one's country in the conventional nationalistic context becomes here the love for

one's state, its language, its cultural diversities and its secular and democratic fabric. Hence, it would be not be incorrect to state that in Alfred Rosian lyrics, the macro becomes the micro: The State of Goa is seen as if it is a nation by itself. His intense love and patriotism towards Goa, its people and language are viewed in this context as a 'culture-specific nationalism', or more pertinently, a 'Konkani nationalism'. One may even call it an intense patriotism towards the Konkani culture, ethos, lands and peoples.

### **6.3 Konkani Nationalism in Alfred Rose's lyrics**

He lived most of his years in the commercial capital of India--- in Mumbai (Bombay), spoke English at home, travelled and worked in varied continents and climes, yet was a Konkani nationalist at heart. This was Alfred Rose, the dramatist, musician, lyrics writer and singer. This chapter will deliberate on how his Konkani lyrics churn out the essence of Konkani nationalism, or in simple words, a deep devotion and patriotism to Konkani ethos--- the language, the land, the peoples (spread in varied states in India from Kochi-Kerala, Goa, Karnataka to Gujarat) and their diverse cultures. His nationalism was not a narrow parochial one, but rather an all-encompassing, catholic, unifying and liberal nationalism, respecting heterogeneity and plurality.

Faced by the atrocious Portuguese inquisition of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, native Goans fled to the neighbouring states of Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra and Gujarat in order to protect their religious affiliations and safeguard their native culture. In this process, the Konkani people settled themselves in new lands and adapted and adopted their new cultures to blend in their existing ones. Thus, Konkani culture got diversified and ramified; the language was absorbed in new scripts (Kannada, Malayalam, Devanagri, Roman and Perso-Arabic) and there were myriad dialects of the same source language. How was Alfred Rose going to unify these diversities in the seventies and eighties? How would he amalgamate these heterogeneous

elements into one umbrella of Konkani ethos? A stage artist that he was, he used the medium of Konkani songs *cantaram* (sung mainly on the radio or in the Konkani popular musical shows and drama viz. *tiatr*), to furnish this task.

In all he has written about three thousand songs in Konkani (most of them unpublished lying in his files), but a vast majority of them celebrate and glorify the Konkani ethos, culture, people(s) and language. In the popular song "Mungllurkar vo Gōykar" (Mangalorean or Goan?), the crisis of a child born of mixed cultures is brought to the fore. The child has a Goan mother and a Mangalorean father; the latter is a *ghor-zavot* (father resides in Goa with his wife's family). However, the family always faces an identity crisis. The father claims his Mangalorean culture to be superior to the Goan, and the mother boasts about her Goan identity. In all this, the poor child (a product of hybrid cultures) gets sandwiched. When the child grows up, his father wants him to marry a Mangalorean girl, and mother insists on a Goan bride. The tussle reaches a climax till the frustrated youth brings his parents to an understanding which in fact brings out the wisdom of the song writer to the fore. He says he's neither a Goan nor a Mangalorean, but a genuine Konkani person, sans regional leanings. He sings:

*Soglloch zalom bejar, ekdom zalom ragar. Ek dis  
maim-k ani*

*paik hanvem, ubim kelim mhoje mukhar.*

*Hanv nhoi mhunnlem Gōykar, nhoi mhunnlem  
Mungllurkar.*

*Gōykar nhoim, Munglurkar nhoim punn nizacho  
Konkannkar.*

*Utram mhojim aikon maim-paichio somplio uzzoti,  
Gōykar-Munglurkar, Karwarkar Konkonnchi mati.  
Tea bhair Mallvonkar Vengurlekar mandchio nhoi  
ganvchio zati*

*Ekvottan pettoum-ia Konknni bhaxechio vati*

(Verdes 146)

There is a moral lesson which Alfred Rose gives us in order to instil in us Konkani-nationalism: demolish all regional and dialectical differences and unite as one Konkani people. Whether Goan, Manglorean, Karwari, Malvani or Vengulekar --- we are all Konkani people! The last line here says, 'let us light the lamp of Konkani unity together', and makes a fervent urge to unite as one community of Konkani-people.

Likewise, in the lyrics of "Gōykar", Alfred Rose proudly sings praise of the Goans who are working in varied parts of the globe and still uphold the Konkani ethos and language. Whether working in London, Portugal, Germany, Paris or any other European nation--- they work hard and take honour in speaking Konkani. In last stanza of the song "Gōykar", the singer sings:

*Portugal vo German-ak,  
Paris-ak vo London-ak,  
Gōykar huxear kosleai kamank,  
Gōykar, Gōykar, Gōykar, Gōykar,  
Gōykar, sodanch ami huxear,  
Konkani uloitat London-che Gōykar,  
Konkani uloitat London-che Gōykar*

(Verdes 68)

The song pays a tribute to the Konkani speaking Goans and celebrates their hard work and love for the Konkani language. These lyrics ignite the fire of Konkani nationalism among Goans spread all India and the world. The lakhs of Goans settled in London till today, proudly speak in Konkani whenever they meet each other (*Konkani uloitat London-che Gōykar*). In other words, despite having Portuguese passports and working in the United Kingdom, they are still Konkani people at heart. They love their land, language and will do anything to uphold their Goan identity.

Konkani nationalism takes a new dimension in "Hany Konkani Zannam", a duet between a Goan Konkani theatre director (sung by Alfred Rose) who is looking out for a singer for his play and a Goan girl who has travelled all over the world and has apparently forgotten to speak proficient Konkani. The duet becomes hilarious when the girl's Anglicized Konkani amuses the listeners and the man satirizes her for forgetting her Konkani. She confesses that Konkani was spoken by cooks and it was English she spoke most often.

*Rita Rose: Konknni bhashany visronk nam. To speak I was feeling shy.  
Kuznera lagim tikleam, atam hany koring try.*

*Alfred Rose: Aple bhitor Konknni ulotitai maim ani  
pai.  
Bhurgeank Inglezin vaddoitai kosh  
vhoddvikai.  
Kuznanatli bhas mhonn ti kuznant  
dovorchinhoi.  
Tika salanthaddun man diunk zai x3  
(Verdes 13)*

The last stanza of the song is the voice of the author himself. He laments that the parents speak Konkani among themselves and use English to communicate with their children. As a result, Konkani becomes a language used in the kitchen with butlers and chefs. It is time to give Konkani language its due respect. No longer should we treat the language like a kitchen rag, but bring it reverently to the living room of prominence and speak it with honour and respect, he avers. In fact, even today Konkani has come into prominence through music and song.

Alfred Rose's love for Konkani language reaches a high pitch in "Komnidadin Sobonam" (Unsuited for the Communidade commune). Here the singer advocates the promotion of speaking Konkani among the people of his community. In the din of

speaking English among the more sophisticated families, the spoken form of Konkani gets neglected. If the gen-next confesses that they do not know to speak or even understand Konkani, then it is a shameful situation. He makes a quick allusion to the European children who proudly speak their English or their respective mother-tongue with a love and zeal, without a whiff from any other cultural influences. However, Goan parents expose their children to English education and cultural influences which makes them alien to Konkani. They are unable to communicate with their grandparents and hang their heads with embarrassment. The last two lines are teeming with an utter patriotic verve as this is Alfred Rose's voice giving advice to the affected Konkani people who are getting into the mesh of cultural hybridity.

*Mhunnttat bhurgeank amchea Konkani somzonam,  
Kedi vhodd loz hi chintlear.*

*Hanv mhunnonam Inglez xikounchi nhoi, punn*

*Amchie bhaxek ghalchi nhoi kallokhar*

*Amche maim-bhaxek veng marun voir kadd'ia amchem  
mannkulem Goa xar*

(Fernandes 134)

Here he states how we need to teach our children Konkani along with English too. If we embrace our mother tongue Konkani, it will help to bring progress to our tiny state of Goa. Likewise, Konkani nationalism is seen in several songs of Alfred Rose. Some of his songs were titled with the names of rivers and places in Goa. For example: "Mandovi" "Dona Paul" and "Dudsagar". In the lyrics of "Mandovi", the singer proposes to a girl named Gloria who is about to commit suicide on the Mandovi river banks, and invariably brings out the beauty of this beautiful river of the Konkan province. Likewise, in "Dona Paul", there is an allusion to the story of the girl Dona Paula after whom the sea-facing village is named. "Dudsagar" brings to mind the beauty of the gushing Dudsagar waterfalls and praises its majestic grandeur through song. Thus, through such songs, Alfred Rose glorifies the beauty of the Goan landscape.

## 6.4 Patriotism through Gōykarponn

Though he lived in Mumbai (Bombay), Alfred Rose had Goa embedded in his heart and soul. There are several songs he has written and sung in praise of Goa-- its landscape, people and ethos. In the lyrics of "Beautiful Goa", the writer sings praise to the Goan land and language Konkani. *Uidentichem nokhetr* (star of the Orient) and *Bhangarachem Goa* (golden Goa) are some of the expressions he uses to praise the land. He sings for Goa, its hills and shores, its salt-pans, fields and orchards, its rivers and flora-fauna---Goa is celebrated and glorified through this song...He celebrates Gōykarponn (his Goan ethos and identity)'

*Goa Goa sodanch tum amkam zai,  
Konkani bhas amchi maim.  
Goa Goa astoli sovostkai  
Asot tor Sant Francis Gōycho Pati*  
(Fernandes 70)

The mention of Gōycho Saib (Saint of Goa) St. Francis Xavier, is significant here. It brings alive the spiritual devotion of the Konkani people particularly, the Goans, towards St. Francis Xavier, whose mortal remains are preserved in Bom-Jesus Basilica- Old Goa. Songs such as "Beautiful Goa" infuse in the listeners a deep patriotism and love for Goa.

Patriotism and Gōykarponn take a new turn in "Gōyche Hindu ani Christany", a song celebrating Hindu-Christian amity in the secular fabric of Goa (which becomes a microcosm for India). The lyrics of this song outline the friendship which exists among the Hindu and Christian communities in Goa. It also traces the partition of India into Hindustan and Pakistan in the forties and says that we have to transcend the divisive forces of class and religion to be able to stay united and harmonious as Goan people.

*Indiek Svoraj mevlam, vhodd boball zalo sonvsarant.  
Kaibore Indieche zale fante,  
Hindumni ghoddlem Hindustan, Musolmanamni*

*Pakistan...*

*Dhormancho vegllochar korun, zatelet gorenkar,  
Ekvottan ravonk zai dis aileat marekar...*

(Fernandes 27)

Alfred Rose is in fact urging his listeners to remain united despite varied religious and cultural affiliations. Though India may have been divided due to political reasons of those times, we have to keep the nation and more particularly Goa, united. By doing so, we will display the ingenuity and brilliance of our *Gøykarponn*.

A new dimension of nationalism, love for India and more particularly the Konkani people(s), is seen in the lyrics of “Ami Soglle Ek”. Sung in sprightly tune, the song is a quintessentially a national integration booster which harps on the need to be united as a part of keeping the Konkani language alive despite its region-specific diversities. The opening stanza of the song strings in the unifying elements which knit the theme of unity herein:

*Gøykar, ami Gøykar,  
Zanv Bardezkar Saxttikar vo Iliaskar,  
Bhas amchi, mat mat mudar  
Tori soglle, ami Gøyche Gøykar  
Tech porim, Sawantwaddikar  
Malwankar Vengurlekar ani Karwarkar,  
Dusre asat, bhav amche Mongllurkar  
Punn ami soglle ek Konkannkar*

(Verdes 8)

One of Alfred Rose's popular songs, sung for inter-religious meets which advocates inter-religious harmony, is “Ami Soglle Ek” (We are all one!). It injects a high dose of patriotism in the listeners and is usually sung for Unity Feasts in Goa (*Ekvottachim Festam*). It is also sung as a grand-finale-song to conclude musicals and tiatrs. The lyrics in the third stanza also encompass a deep-seated national pride, as Goa is viewed as a part of India.

*Keralkar, zany Mudrav, Punjabi Sindhi India che put  
soglle,*  
*Musolman, Hindu, Kristany oce dhorm amche azaat  
veggle-veggle,*  
*Vet bhor pott bhukelam mhonn, chakri korunk ami  
pordesant pavle,*  
*Nosai pisai doryant buddonk zai, ami mhonn India che  
put soglle.*

*Ohh ami sogllim ek, Ami sogllim ek  
India amcho soglle ancho gany ami sogllim ek*

**(Verdes 8-9)**

The singer-lyricist urges through these lyrics that we have to squash our regional and religious differences and work unitedly as citizens of one nation. We may be a part of the Indian diaspora working in foreign nations, but we have to keep our petty differences and jealousies aside to work as one community of Indian people. This is a song which was written in the times of strife between regions and religions. It instils a new hope of national pride and unity in the Konkani people and makes them realize that they are proud citizens of a unified, secular and democratic India.

In Alfred Rose, we see a nationalism of varied flavours and strands weaving itself into a tapestry which exudes Konkani nationalism, patriotism and pride of establishing his self-identity as a Goan (*Gøykarponn*). His love for Goa ---its landscape, language (Konkani), its culture and people, supersedes everything else. His use of Konkani in varied dialects (Antruzi, Bardez-Catholic, Saxtti and even the Anglicized one) shows that he will not allow the Konkani language to remain insular but rather porous to diverse and heterogeneous cultural influences which the Konkani people have historically speaking, experienced over the last few centuries. His nationalism is unique --- it is unifying and glorifying the Konkani ethos and experiences! It does not create discord or lean towards jingoism. His songs celebrate love for the land, language and its people.

Though he lived most of his years in Mumbai and abroad, Alfred Rose was deservedly bestowed the Goa State Award in 2004 (posthumously), for his immense contribution to the promotion of Goan culture through Konkani song, literature and drama. It was for the first time that a Goan living outside the State of Goa was bestowed this honour.





## Superstitions, Spiritual beliefs and Social evils in Alfred Rose's Lyrics

7

Goan life in all its rustic and traditional splendour, is best seen in the villages which to a great extent have people who follow age old practices, have a deep faith in tell-tale beliefs (however unscientific) and display an urge to practice and believe superstitions. Though Alfred Rose had lived outside Goa for a long time, his childhood spent with his parents, especially his mother Dolorosa Fernandes, had left a lasting impression on all his beliefs and traditional ideas. This chapter will attempt to explore superstitions, spiritual beliefs and social evils in Alfred Rose's lyrics.

Did Alfred Rose expressly believe in superstitions? Did he show an inclination towards following irrational cultural practices and blind beliefs? What were his views on social evils like alcoholism, stealing, cheating and violence? An attempt will be made to identify, explore and discuss these questions with pertinent examples from his select lyrics.

## 7.1 Situating Superstitions in the Lyrics of Alfred Rose

Superstition or *achar* (in Konkani), is understood to be a widely held but irrational belief in supernatural influences, especially as leading to good or bad luck, or a practice based on such a belief. It is a common practise to believe in superstitions if one is unscientific, irrational and gullible. Though lack of education is seen to be directly associated with superstitions, we have instances where a lot of educated elite too, believe in them.

Alfred Rose was a man with a scientific temperament. He wrote songs like "Scientist" which glorifies and praises the highly qualified individuals of a scientific bent of mind. He did not believe in irrational beliefs which were demeaning human values and particularly the ones which were belittling women. In "Acharanchem Vojem" which literally means 'the burden of superstitions', Alfred Rose narrates the episode of a newly wedded couple whose married life becomes a bed of misfortune right from the wedding day. The song is sung from the point-of-view of the emcee (Master of ceremony) who announces the wedding reception of the couple.

Series of unfortunate events happen on the wedding day. While cutting the wedding cake, the groom accidentally cuts the finger of his bride and there is a gush of blood spilled all over. Seeing this, the weak-hearted groom's father gets a panic attack and is rushed to the hospital. The happy occasion of marriage turns sour with commotion and anxiety. The wedding is tainted with bad omens and the new bride is held responsible as it is her entry (it is superstition which says so) that causes this misfortune. In a couple of days, somebody forgets to turn the tap off in the groom's house and the entire house is inundated and completely soaked up to the beds and linen. Again, the bride is made the scape goat in sync with superstitious beliefs.

*Sasumaim-n kelem ferem-ferem, vhoklechem paul nhoi borem, ghorant amchea aili saddesati,*

*Vauit noxibachi vhokol, amkam ghalunk alia zokol,  
sant-bhogtank pettonk laglio vatti.  
Nhouro babddo sot Deva pava, maum n mhunntem  
tujem tondd sambhav, zap kadda kaddittolim tujo katti.  
Petrol ghalun lasun uddoinam tor vhoron doriant  
buddot ghorantmhojea naka hi pon'votti*

(Verdes 2)

The belief that a new bride either brings good or bad luck to the groom's household is a notion which has been existing since days of yore. She is called a *pon'votti* or *saddevati*, which literally means 'a harbinger of misfortune'. The mother-in-law suggests that such a girl should be burnt alive or made to drown in the sea as she holds no goodness for the future of the marriage. Goodness is associated with the groom and evil with the woman. There is an overt indication that such beliefs have no rational or scientific basis, except a patriarchal intent to treat the woman as subservient to the man. However, Alfred Rose expresses his disdain towards such biased and malicious beliefs. In the last stanza of the song, he advocates a need to rise above the burden of superstition and get rational in our thinking. So, he sings:

*Kazar zatoch ghorant kitench vauit ailem zalear  
mhunnttat vaitt noxib vhoklechem.  
Punn kazar zatoch ghorant kitem borem yeit zalear  
mhunnttat borem noxib nhoureachem.  
Borem ailam tem vhoklechea noxihan, yeum nezo mista  
koslem chintop amchem.  
Nennarui hem gheun asat, xiklolim hem gheun asat,  
noxttem vojem acharanchem*

(Verdes 2)

The need for illuminated and educated minds to overthrow the bane of superstition and blind faith is expressed in the last lines. Sadly, it is not just the less educated but also the educated that blindly follow irrational practices and beliefs. He questions how only a bride can be responsible for misfortune in a marriage and a

groom gets credit for any fortune which a newly wedded couple begets.

Interesting beliefs are elicited by Alfred Rose in his select lyrics. “Kalchi Koddi” is a quintessential example of how eating curry from a mud pot (*kunn'nnem*) ensures that the wedding day of the one who eats it, is a rainy one. Conversely, it is believed that if it rains on the wedding day, either the bride or groom, has eaten straight from the mud pot or *kunn'nnem*.

*Kalchie koddien xitui borem lagtalem,  
Kunn'nneant jevity zalear odik ruchtalem,  
Kunn'nnea bogor mhojean jevunk zainaslem,  
Nustem tonddak lavunk nam zalear choltalem.*

*Pai mhozo hem polleun mhaka mhunntalo,  
Kazarak puta tujea paus poddttolo,  
Utram aikon, jiv mhozo murgott'ttalo.*

*Hea acharanchi porva korun thoddi,  
Xitar sodanch ghetalom kalchi koddi...*

(Verdes 105)

Interestingly, the above lines from “Kalchi Koddi” highlight the cultural ethos of Goa, with special reference to its food. Fish curry is a must for an average Goan whose day is incomplete without *xit-coddi* and fried fish on a food-platter. More than the fresh curry, the previous day's dehydrated curry or *kalchi koddi* is even tastier when it is relished with either, bread, chappatis or even *cunji*. The superstition is attached to eating *kalchi koddi* in an earthen pot. However, Alfred Rose states that he does not care for such superstitious beliefs. He keeps reminiscing about the delectable *kalchi koddi*. He is even excited about his wedding day which will be blest with a downpour, as per the belief. In fact, Alfred Rose subverts the superstitious belief to make it look like an exciting adventure. He is full of positive zeal and enthusiasm and is able to use his wit to make an unpleasant venture full of joy and enthusiasm.

## 7.2 Spiritual Beliefs in Alfred Rose's Lyrics

Cultural and spiritual beliefs are an integral part of the socio-religious life of an Everyman in the Goan context. Several song lyrics by Alfred Rose exude cultural and spiritual beliefs and somehow reinforce the positive values of devotion and faith in the minds of the Goan faithful. In an interesting song "Pursany", meaning procession, Alfred Rose sings of a married man who is shocked to learn that his wife gives birth to triplets. As a middle-class man with modest means, he is struggling to make ends meet. And to add to it, he is now the father of three children at once. He asks his wife how it was possible. She confides in him about her devotion to the Holy Trinity. This may sound to be a humorous song, but it does underscore the beliefs associated with twins and triplets. It is believed that they are born of a deep devotion of one of the parents to the Almighty. In this case, the triplets are born as the mother prayed fervently to the Holy Trinity.

*Bailexim vochon kelo vichar, sang baile ho koslo to  
vepar,*

*Khuinchea Santa lagim kortali rozar,*

*Bail khoim angvonno kortali sabar, sodanch Satizm  
Trinidadadi mukhar,*

*Trinidad mhonnttoch teg zonn uhe zale darar.*

*Zaum Saiba zaum, bailen haddlem narv.*

*Satizm Trinidadin teg zonn dhaddle mhone bhorlo  
ganv,*

*Bara apostlam lagim bailen keolem tor orasanv.*

*Ghorant amchea mista yetlem aslem bara zonnanchem  
pursany*

(Verdes 171)

The faith in the Trinity, begets the triplets. The man is grateful that she did not pray to the twelve disciples. Imagine having a dozen children to look after! It would have been a procession of twelve apostles! This is how the song gets its apt title, "Pursany".

At a deeper level, the spiritual side of the mother is brought to the fore. In Goa, childless parents often repose their faith in Saint Ana and offer masses and novenas to pray for fertility.

“Gōyant Saibinn Disli” is another song which reiterates the spiritual beliefs of an average Goan, irrespective of religion, in the apparition of Mother Mary which came to a young lad Martin Almeida from Mapusa in September-October 1994. Almeida, along with a Canada-returned lady Ivetta Gomes, communicated this apparition and the messages from Our Lady to the faithful in Goa. These apparitions and related testimonies are contained in the books viz. *The Happenings of Batim* by Rosario F. Rodrigues and *Was Mary There?* by Marc De Souza. This apparition in Goa reinforced the faith of the people in Our Lady. With tears in her eyes, Virgin Mary urged the faithful to give up their sinful ways through repentance and come close to God; to accept Jesus as their Lord and Saviour and open the doors of peaceful living through reconciliation.

*Saibinn roddli dukanchio zhori korun,  
Maglem tinnem aple donui hat ugte korun,  
Porot porot sangta amkam Jezucho mog korunk,  
Jezuk ulo korum-ia pirachit ami korun*

(Fernandes 112)

This entire song was based on a real-life episode which created news in the early nineties about Mother Mary's apparition on Batim hill, and since then the spiritual devotion of the faithful in Goa has seen a tremendous growth.

Spiritual beliefs find new perspectives in the lyrics of the song “Kumsaracho Sakrament”, where the spiritual nuances of the sacrament of reconciliation or Confession are explored. The concept of 'sin' from the book of Genesis is explained. Thereafter, the New Testament salvation through Christ is elucidated. The sacrament of Confession or *Kumsaracho Sakrament* is a gateway to redemption from sin and paves the way to repentance and a grace-filled Christian life. So, in one of

the stanzas, Alfred Rose advocates the faithful to a benediction-filled living through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

*Ek kurpeyont otmo, rupnem Devachem,  
Chukon tor tacher poddot khot putkachem.  
Kumsarachea sakramentan, mellun ghe  
Luksom zaloem, dennem kurpechem*

(Fernandes 7)

It is indeed a blessing to be able to get the benefits of the Sacraments of Confession, Communion and Anointing of the Sick ---- all at the time of one's death. Alfred Rose prays that all the faithful get the blessings of these sacraments at the hour of one's death. This song in a covert way echoes the spiritual beliefs of the Christian faithful in the Holy Sacraments, particularly the sacrament of Reconciliation.

A close reading of the lyrics reveals the presence of *Dev* or God in the very title of the songs, thus indicating the presence of the Almighty which is of great importance to a world of depleting moral values. In songs like "Dev Nhidonk Nam", the idea of living a conscientious life sans sin is advocated. The lyrics admonish the faithful of the dangers of living in sin and encourage a cleansing of the soul through repentance and reconciliation. The idea that there is a God above who watches over us is implicitly drawn in these lyrics.

*Devachie kheastintlo konn Suttonk nam,  
Farikponn dinastanam uronk nam,  
Devachea guttacho thay aiz pasun konnakuch mellonk  
nam,  
Bhavarthan chol'loleankui soddunk nam, sovostkai  
dinastannam ravonk nam,  
Hea vorvim gomon yeta bhavamni Rochnnar Dev  
nhidonk nam*

(Verdes 38)

The lyrics urge the listener/faithful to give up sinful, evil ways and embrace a holy and grace-filled life. We have to answer to all

our sins and it is time we follow the path of faith and God. Likewise, in “Devak Dium-ia Argam”, the singer (Rita Rose) sings with a tone of gratitude to God for all the goodness and blessings He has bestowed upon her. It is prayers and God's divine graces that made it possible for her to marry the man of her life.

*Anj boddve vazoitat orgam,  
Devak ami dium-ia argam,  
Ek zalim separad kallzam,  
Nastanam kantteanchim durgam*

(Verdes 38)

These lines express the deep faith and devotion of a bride who is grateful to the Almighty for making her marital union possible without any hindrances or *kantteanchim durgam* (which literally means 'thorny barriers'). Her deep spirituality and reverence of God, is revealed in the lyrics of “Devak Dium-ia Argam”.

Similarly, in the lyrics of “Dhonia! Bhogos Mhaka”, the penitent singer sings in a tone of humility, accepting his sinful ways and ingratitude for the several blessings received. The song echoes a close connection of the singer with the Almighty and reveals the spiritual devotion of the singer. The less fortunate creation of God blesses and praises the Creator Almighty. However, the singer is so blest with limbs and all other normal sensory functions and yet he forgets to express his gratitude to his creator.

*Dhonia bhogos mhaka, don kan dileai mhaka,  
Don dolle dileai mhaka, don paim dileai mhaka,  
Kan-dolle ani paim nastanam, ti rochnna vakhanddtta  
tuka,  
Sogllim dennim mhaka ason kednam-i chukon hanv  
okman kortam tuka.  
Dhoniaaaa.....Dhoniaaaaa...Bhogos Mhaka*

(Verdes 39)

He wants to show his utter gratefulness to the Lord and begs for mercy for being thankless and taking all his normal faculties for

granted. He has offended the Lord, and with a repentant heart says -- Dhoniaaaaaa... Bhogos Mhaka (Lord, Have mercy on me!).

Alfred Rose wrote several songs dedicated to religious personages and saints. They are all indicative of his strong spiritual moorings and emanate his devotion to several faith-abiding saints whose lives are worthy of emulation. Songs such as "Sant Francis", "Mother Theresa", "Sant Anton" and "Father Lyon" are examples of the same. However, in Chapter Three, the religious and devotional themes in Alfred Rose's lyrics, discuss most of these aspects in detail.

### **7.3 Alfred Rose's Lyrics: Responding to Social Evils**

In Chapter 2, dealing with morals and social values, there was an obvious realisation that Alfred Rose's lyrics make a strong statement to inculcate positive social values and morals for the betterment of society. Concomitantly, some lyrics make a strong statement in response to evils that plague society, such as alcoholism, money laundering, hoarding, gambling, stealing or burglary, these being only select social evils which Alfred Rose brought to highlight through his songs. There were several more and Alfred Rose never failed to speak his mind about anything he considered evil in society. His aim was to sensitize and awaken the conscience of the listeners to eschew social evils in the interest of creating a better and healthier society. His response to social evils was twofold: firstly, to create awareness about their existence in overt or subtle forms in his contemporary times; secondly, to ensure that society condemns the social evils and discourages their perpetuation.

In the lyrics of "Gōychi Fenni", the locally brewed Goan alcohol, *Feni* is suggested to be considered the National drink. Rose is actually aware of the potential of this local brew. It was in the year 2009, much after this song was written, that The Goan Feni got the GI (Geographical Indication) tag. Such was the far-sightedness of this great composer.

Though overtly the lyrics do not suggest alcoholism and substance abuse, the lyrics covertly hint at how excessive consumption of this brew can affect the mental capacities of the consumer. Notice the following lines:

*Fenni subej zatoch, dolle zatat krink krink,  
Ani ginean apxinch zata xrink,  
Chintun poilear borem, dista mhaka khorem,  
Fenni Gōychi national drink,  
Gōycho serkar vaurta fenni korunk national drink...*  
(Verdes 70)

Abusive consumption of feni can have detrimental effects on the health of the consumer. The eyes get dopey and the lids almost droop with drunkenness. The mind shrinks and no amount of logical reasoning and rational thinking is possible. Alcoholism and excessive drinking of spirits can result in a lot of physical harm, though by declaring *Feni* as a National drink, the Goa Government can boost tourism and gradually enhance the Goan economy. Though Alfred Rose seems to celebrate the Goan alcoholic brew, he subtly hints at the social problems it can cause if consumed in excess.

The problem of alcoholism along with other social evils is voiced in the lyrics of “Agent Fottkire”. This is a duet between Rita Rose (who assumes the role of a victim of cheating by fraudulent agents in the Gulf) and Alfred Rose (who acts as a Goan who helps his fellow Goan sister in distress). Alfred asks the woman the reason which prompted her to leave her homeland and come to work in the alien sands of the Gulf. Her reply is an honest confession:

*RR: Pai bhav soro piyeta, adhar nam konnacho,  
Bhuk sonxinezo zaun rosto dhorlo Arabiacho,  
AR: Punn kotta thoinsor pavon, sonvsar zaunk  
pavlo dukhacho, Ibadd zaunk pavlo vas,  
pormollit fulancho*  
(Fernandes 52)

There is close connection between penury and alcoholism within a family. The girl mentions how she was compelled to come to the Gulf to work as both the males in her family, her father and brother are alcoholics and she needed to feed the family. Therefore, she sought to work in the Gulf. However, the young innocent girl had to compromise on her virtues in order to survive in the Gulf. Alfred Rose uses the poetic expression *thaud zaink pavlo vas, pormollit fulancho* to hint at these compromises during her work tenure in Kuwait.

This song is also a jeer at the deceitful agents (*fottkire agents*) who dupe innocent clients of their hard-earned money and never register their contracts in the Indian Embassy offices in the Gulf countries. In such cases, the youth, particularly young girls are victims of domestic violence and all kinds of abuse. As the victim girl confesses in this song, in her next job at Beirut, the employer withholds her passport and makes her work without pay. She has somehow managed to run away and escape the treachery. However, being unregistered by the corrupt agents, the Government emigration centres are unwilling to help her and she is left at the mercy of good Samaritans from Goa living there. Here, cheating, debauchery by corrupt agents, and abuse of domestic labour by rich and powerful Arabs, become social evils worthy of discussion. They emerge as powerful social issues in the lyrics of "Agent Fottkire". Alfred Rose cautions his listeners about such agents and advises those aspiring for Gulf jobs, to beware.

*RR: Aikat mhojea bhoinnimni, tea Agent-ank  
patieunk favonam  
Tanchea kontradancer, matui bhavarth  
dovrunk zainam,*

*AR: Kontrad Emigratian ofisant registad korunk zai  
dubhav nam,  
Tednanch serkar adhar dilea bogor ravcho  
nam*

(Fernandes 52)

This issue of fraudulent deals by agents luring clients seeking jobs in the Gulf is dealt with sensitivity by Rose. In an interview with Rita Rose by the present researcher, it was revealed that Alfred Rose had written this song after a real-life incident which he experienced in Beirut when he was working and living there. Hence, one can say with conviction that songs such as "Agent Fottkire" hold a mirror to society and it's debilitating social and moral values.

In the lyrics of "Dev Nhidonk Nam", Alfred Rose awakens the conscience of his listeners singing about how in a world full of crime, robberies and pride, there is a need to realise that there is a God above looking at us and hence we need to pursue good and eschew evil. The Lord above is pained to see how humans kill, murder, plunder and harm one and other without a prick of conscience. He mentions how material wealth is short-lived; it will turn to dust. We need to look at the greater good of mankind through our good deeds and righteous living.

*Krimi adarlear kednanch bogsonk nam,  
Punn choriechem konnank pochonk nam,  
Ghorant tanchea dolldirponn, kedinch suseg mhunnon  
disonk nam,*  
*Gorvan choltoleank, vhodpponn mellonk nam,  
Zoddloli zodd hatant uronk nam,  
Hea vorvim gomon yeta bhavamni, Rochnnar Dev  
nhidonk nam*

(Verdes 38)

Alfred Rose seems to caution the listeners about the evil in society which goes without any fear of God or of anyone else. Might has become right and the deadly sin of Pride is ruling the ego-centric mind of Man. In his selfish endeavour to amass riches, man has forgotten basic human values of selfless living and sharing. The lyrics of this song quite forcefully bring Alfred Rose's moral message of awakening the conscience to do away with evil and pursue the positive morals of honesty, righteous and upright living sans crime and corruption.

In another song titled "Konnachea Patkan?" Alfred Rose lashes out at those who exploit the poor through corrupt means and cheat them through black marketing and other illicit ways. The persona sings about his father who exploited the poor and lived by cheating them. However, the old man (father of the singer) was inflicted by illness and never got to enjoy his material wealth. Furthermore, he indulged in black market hoarding, amassed a lot of wealth and never cared about the hardships of the poor. The curse of the afflicted poor affected the singer and now he is overburdened with loans to be paid off, loans which were created by the father in order to amass profits and wealth.

*Ghor bhorlaim duddvamni.  
Punn hanv mortam volvolleamni  
Gorib roddita astanam dukamni.  
Black market kelem tumi...  
Polle tuka lagun, goribanche tirap, aikonk yetat, hea  
chearui vattamni...*

(Fernandes 12)

Through such songs, Alfred Rose is giving his listeners a clear moral message: give up cheating and exploiting the poor through black marketing, money laundering and other dishonest means. The curses of the poor are truly painful and they do affect the family and progeny of the perpetrator. The singer's father may have committed the sin of cheating and exploiting the poor through illicit means, but now it is the son (singer) who has to answer for his father's wrongs. The son has to pay off the father's debts and this is a retribution he has to suffer for his father's misdeeds.

The outcome of materialism and amassing wealth is given a new understanding in the lyrics of "Duddu". The opening lines bring out the need for Vitamin M (money) which rules and dominates our lives.

*To soro kaddittat kiteak, zai dekhun duddu.  
Tio chorio kortak kiteak, zai dekhun duddu.*

*Tio sorti kaddttat kiteak, zai dekhun duddu,  
Duddu, duddu, duddu, duddu, duddu, duddu...  
Duddu nam zalear sonvsar koddu...*

(Fernandes 95)

Robbery, alcohol-related business and gambling, are all centred on making a quick buck without any compunctions or guilt. Alfred Rose covertly instils the fact that one needs to eschew these social evils and materialistic greed and have a heart towards the weak, poor and marginalised. *Duddu nam zalear sonvsar koddu*, implying that life without money is bitter, full of trials and difficulties. It is assumed that money brings in luxuries and easy living and makes life sweet and worthy. However, vices and social evils like burglary, sale of spurious alcohol and gambling are all with the singular motive to make money. The last line of the song is significant: *Duddu aslear sogot tuka mhunntta senheoru* (If you are rich, you are treated with respect and honour). However, in the same song, Alfred Rose indicates how excessive riches give sleepless nights to the affluent. As elders had always said, it is the rich and powerful who can dictate their might as right with the power of *duddu* (money). In a subtle way, Rose is suggesting that it is values of honesty and truth that are more superior to money and material wealth. We have to pursue these values and morals and live a righteous life. *Mortoch duddu vhorche nant sorgar*. Wealth will not take us to heaven, but good values and a righteous living, will surely do.

The underlying tone of Alfred Rose through such songs is perennially positive and moral. He suggests that we need to be happy, do the right things and eschew social evils like alcoholism, cheating, debauchery, corruption, burglary and exploiting the poor and marginalised through black market hoarding. In the lyrics of “Don’t worry be happy!” Alfred Rose exposes the problems faced by the State of Goa ranging from immigration, joblessness, and alcoholism. Besides, he also highlights how Goan land is being sold to outsiders by our locals. And despite all these problematic matters, in a carefree tone he

sings "Don't worry, be happy!" With all the negativity all around, the lyrics instil a positive spirit and a sense of *joie de vivre* despite adverse circumstances. The song is inspired by the American song lyrics and melody of a similar English song with the same title. It was a song by American musician Bobby McFerrin released in 1988.

Alfred Rose's lyrics are an antidote to a morally and spiritually crippling society. They are an embodiment of positive energy, moral insights and scientific temperament. He reflects the social reality of his times and does not hesitate to be frank and outspoken about serious social evils such as alcoholism, black marketing, marginalisation of the poor and money laundering. His leanings towards spiritual beliefs and faith in God are reinforced through his songs. He denounces superstition in a gentle and courteous manner, without being brash or spiteful. Alfred Rose encourages a scientific spirit and uses ingenuity and wit to counter superstition. His lyrics abound with a positive zeal and spiritual wisdom. This is precisely the reason they become evergreen songs which are relevant to any time and clime.





## Alfred Rose's Lyrics: Encouraging Traditional Occupations

8

Goan traditional occupations have been the lifeline for sustainable community living over the years, particularly in the rural areas. Traditional occupations like that of the *poder* (baker), farmer, tailor, barber, shoemaker, fisherman/woman, carpenter and mason are a few examples. In the last century, the times when Alfred Rose composed most of his lyrics, these occupations were endowed by tradition, and passed on from generation to generation. Many of the lyrics in fact inspire and encourage traditional occupations and make a plea to carry them on for posterity in order to enrich our fast-waning culture and heritage.

### 8.1 Butlers and Cooks

Goans have always been branded with the stereotype of being butlers or cooks (*kuzner*) in the big wide international world, since days of yore. The many who resided in Mumbai (erstwhile Bombay) were referred to as Goa-Panv (a nickname for Goans),

as this was the quintessential Goan symbol of the village baker. The Goans in Bombay and abroad made a name as excellent cooks or chefs in the homes of the White colonizers in the pre-independence times and ensured that their home and hearth back in Goa sustained comfortably. They made sure that their families back home were never wanting in any material need. They were hardworking, conscientious and were known for their culinary skills.

Alfred Rose's "Amche Purvoz" captures the essence of this tradition quite impressively. The opening lines of the song outline the sincerity and work ethics of the Goan cooks.

*Adlea tempar purvoz amche kuzniant sirvi korun,  
Khuxal aslet huske a meklle hem vet bhor pott bhorun.  
Fuddar chintun moddit thodde sambhallalet zoddun.  
Upkartolem mhonn aplea bhurgeank voir kaddlunk*  
(Fernandes 55)

The song lyrics celebrate the Goan *kuzner* (cook butler) and glorify his distinctive traits. They are very honest, thrifty and focus on just two things---quality of service and concern for their family. Their morality and work ethics are superlative. Alfred Rose praises their positive traits in each stanza. In the second stanza, he speaks about how God-fearing (*Dev-bhirant*) and diligent they were. They ensured that their bosses officers spoke well of them (*boreponn gheun ofxalachem*). They were humble and had a skilful hand in their kitchens. Though they were working as cooks (a subtly demeaned occupation of Rose's times), they ensured that they saved enough to educate their children. Some of their sons were studying to be lawyers and doctors. Alfred Rose uses this song to display admiration towards the hardworking and morally upright Goan butlers, who despite a dearth of education made sure that they reached great heights in name, skill and fame with their hard work and honesty. And they educated their children to become professionals with white-collared jobs.

Rose belongs to the generation of these children. And hence, these butlers of pre-liberation times become *purvoz* or ancestors of an erstwhile generation. He showers them with acclaim for doing progressive deeds and bringing Goa to greatness and repute. The last stanza of the song climaxes this eulogy:

*Tiatristank adhar dil'lo, tea tempar tea kuzneramni,  
Poili English bhas uloili, konnem amchea kuzneramni,  
Gōykar ami honest mhonn, nanv zoddlem tea  
kuzneramni,  
He kudd ganv-ganvche, tantunt bhav ravtat amche,  
ghoddle konnem kuzneramni?*

(Fernandes 56)

The cooks not just confined themselves to their respective kitchens, but helped their Goan kinsmen. Some of the *tiatrist*s were cooks as well. Rose, himself a *tiatrist* had interacted with his friends in Bombay and abroad who worked as chefs and butlers in many restaurants and homes. The cooks who worked for the Whites (Brits or Europeans) picked up English and spoke the language eloquently. The credit of Goans acquiring the reputation of being sincere and honest goes to these gentlemen. Alfred Rose in passing, mentions how these cooks were instrumental in establishing the *kudds* or clubs which were used as accommodation or dorms by the Goans residing in Bombay between the fifties till contemporary times.

In the lyrics of the duet “Hany Konkani Zannam”, the singer Beatrice who wishes to be a *tiatrist* confesses how she learnt the Konkani language from her Goan cook. She is rebuked by her *tiatr* Director for speaking Konkani laced with a heavy English accent, and forgetting to speak the 'real Konkani'. So, she replies: “*Konknni bhas hanv visronk nam, To speak I was feeling shy, Kuznera lagim xikleam, atam hanv koring try...*” It is evident here that the cooks spoke in Konkani and also picked up the English language in their work-spaces. They mingled with the families they worked with and influenced them immensely both as professionals as well as good and moral humans.

The traditional cooks were mostly male. The women were housewives managing the household. They were good cooks too (but were never acknowledged for their skills). However, in the lyrics of “Goddxem”, Alfred Rose pays a tribute to Dolotosa (his mother) for her excellent culinary skills at preparing healthy and nutritious food for her children. *Ale bele* (pancakes stuffed with freshly grated coconut and palm jaggery), *tuam* (porridge with millet flour and palm jaggery), *filoz* (banana and jaggery pancakes) and *goddvem* (a sweet porridge made with rice and jaggery) are some of the traditional Goan preparations which he mentions in the song.

## 8.2 Farmers

Our ancestors were very close to the earth and soil, they were farmers and loved to work in the fields. Farming was a traditional occupation of most of the Goans in the villages. Fruits, vegetables, paddy and other crops like millet and beans were grown by them. The village homes had their own poultry and piggery which made their lives veritably self-sustaining and self-sufficient. The farmers would produce enough for their own sustenance and sell the excess.

### 8.2.1 Traditional Farming

Alfred Rose's lyrics explore the agrarian lives of our ancestors and celebrate their traditional farming, knowing well that the forthcoming generations were belittling it and pursuing more lucrative and white-collared professional options. Select song lyrics bring out the ethos and pathos of the farmers lives and unravel various dimensions of the tradition.

The central protagonist singer of “Chedum Xetkamteachem” is Rosa Marie. Though she is the only daughter of farmers, she happily sells her vegetables and takes care of her parents. Though she has brothers who have made their lives abroad, she aspires to be the backbone of her parents, taking care of them even though she is a girl.

*Hanv cheddum xetkamteachem, hanstea tonddachem,  
nanvmhojem Rozmari,  
Sodanch gimanchea tempar, kortam hanv vepar gheun  
bhonvtam torkari,  
Uttitam kombeachea sadar sokallim fantear zatokuch  
amori,  
Sanje kinarer vetam, vareak bostam, gheun paichi  
xintari*

(Fernandes 32)

The girl is proud to be a farmer's daughter and gracefully carries out her agrarian duties of helping her parents in the fields. She sells the vegetables during the summer season and it is implied that she is busy with her paddy fields during the monsoons. Rose seems to glorify the farmer and his daughter who has carried on the farming tradition from her parents, unlike her brothers.

In "Gagreachem Mana", originally sung by Rita Rose, a farmer's daughter proudly sings her hard life of working in her farm and then travelling to the Mapusa market to sell her agricultural produce. She exudes qualities of honesty, integrity and sincerity towards her work and displays utter joy and pride at being the daughter of a farmer. She apparently gets proposals from rich and affluent men, but still prefers to marry a farmer as she is convinced that in a farmer's home, the barns overflow with a lot of harvest.

*Mottorkar posorkar gaddekar voddekar zanvoi zaunk  
sodtat amger,  
Dis rat kortat bejar, hanv zaun zalear kazar zatolim  
xetkarager...  
Mhaka duddvankar saiba naka, tanger fokot te  
dudduch asta,  
Dekhun xetkarager hanv kazar zatolim, tanchea  
ghoranu sogllem dista*

(Verdes 63)

The candid confession from the farmer's daughter, well known for her long flowing skirt and her polka dotted blouse

(*gagreachem mana*) implying a low-class peasant woman, opens out a lot of silences hidden in the lives of farmers. Lower in class, seldom exposed to higher education, the lives of the farmers are embedded in rich values and spiritual wealth. They prefer such values over material riches as evident in the confession of the girl in "Gagreachem Mana". She declares that she will not marry a rich man who wallows in money, but instead prefers a peasant or farmer's son who will have all provisions stocked in his barn.

In "Vid Xetkamteachem", a duet sung by a brother and sister, a peasant's hard life is exposed through song. The trials and tribulations of a farmer's life are outlined very succinctly. The lyrics speak about how the day of a farmer begins at dawn at the rooster's crow and never ends till dusk sets in. The first stanza shows the connect of natural elements like the sunset, moonrise, the Angelus bells, the chirping birds and the balmy waters with the diurnal agrarian rituals of the farmers.

*Fantea parar kombea sadar.  
Zagoitanv amoriechea vellar.  
Sad poddttoch kanar, khorem gheun khandar.  
Poilo magtanv Devacho adhar...*

(Fernandes 45)

The harsh life of farmers, who brace with several hardships, is unravelled in the lyrics of "Vid Xetkamteachem". One can observe an intimacy between the farmer and the natural surroundings which envelope the farmer's world. The farmers are seen to be extremely god-fearing and spiritually profound. In their simple and earthy lives, they do not fail to bless the Lord for all the graces they have received in their day-to-day living.

### 8.2.2 Poultry Farming

There are several examples of poultry and animal husbandry which covertly creep into Rose's lyrics. The *kombo-kombi* (rooster and hen) images are creatively woven into his lyrics and they reinforce the fact that our ancestors reared chickens in their

coops to make sure that there was a steady supply of organic eggs and meat. They even made sure that pigs were reared and the sty was well congregated with local pigs. In the fourth stanza of “Khorim Ojapam”(Fernandes 128) or just “Ojapam”(Verdes 158-9), he narrates a humourous episode through song. He mentions how his friend had reared a hen and she perennially laid eggs. However, after some time, the hen sprouted a crown and started crowing at dawn, like a rooster.

*Goyant ek, auchit ghoddnni ghoddli,  
Mhojea amigager, ek tannem sobit kombi posloli,  
Vorsak ti, khub tantiam ghaltali,  
Kitem sangom auchit milagr zali.*

*Kombea porim ti, auchit sad ghalunk lagli,  
Toklie voir xenkrem futtem, tantiam ghalpachi bond  
zali,  
Tantiam ghaltali kombi, kombo zaun bosli,  
Ixttan kitlea zonnank sanglem, porza sot mandinam  
zali*

(Verdes 158-9)

The witty manner, in which the singer-friend addresses the gender-identity crisis of the hen-turned-rooster, is remarkable. It is projected as if it is a miracle, a surprising and eye-brow raising occurrence. But at an underlying level, it confirms the love for having domestic chickens and birds in the backyard of the village house by farmers who love poultry farming. It may not be for commercial reasons, but merely for ensuring that poultry products were available freely in a house which had their own chicken coop filled to its capacity.

Alfred Rose uses the image of the protective hen looking after her chicks in “Mogachea Lina”. Here the singer laments about his wife abandoning him and his two sweet daughters three years after their marriage. The man is totally crestfallen and wonders how he will carry on with this responsibility as a father of two small girls. He says that even a hen would not abandon her

chickens and take care of them as a protective mother, much unlike his Lina. And therefore, he sings:

*Kombi pasun aplea pilank soddinam,  
Zanavoram pasun aplea pilank soddinam,  
Punn tunvem Lina bhurgeanchi porva kelinam.  
Gelem chintinastanam*

(Verdes 82)

Such images of hens or roosters are very common for those who have lived in Goan villages and observed the behaviour of these birds. Alfred Rose in several songs uses the *Kombo-kombi* (hen-rooster) images or episodes to lace his lyrics with humour as well as thought-provoking metaphors.

### 8.2.3 Pig Farming

No Catholic Goan home was complete without a pig-sty to accommodate the domesticated pigs in the backyard. Pig farming implied the raising and breeding of domestic pigs as livestock by most Catholic Goan households, more so in the sixties till the nineties. Of course, in certain villages the practise to rear pigs for personal consumption as well as to sell for commercial reasons still goes on. Pigs would also serve as scavengers for the times when septic tanks were seldom heard of. Hence, pig farming was very practical to take care of excess food (*dhonn* was the slop collected from the kitchen wet leftovers served to the pigs as food) from the houses, as well as to keep the place devoid of any filth. Moreover, during feasts and festive occasions like weddings, a pig or *leitao* was butchered to prepare *sorpotelor* other pork preparations like sausages, *vindalho*, *hadd mas* or *buccch* (a delectable preparation made with pork intestines).

Alfred Rose was familiar with the Goan tradition of pig farming. Therefore, he occasionally uses the image of pigs in his lyrics. In the most rib-tickling fun-filled duet "Dukor ani Leitao" (Pig and Sow) sung originally by Alfred and Rita Rose, there is an amorous romance between the pig and sow belonging to two

neighbours who are at daggers drawn over the matter. The song begins with the lady (Rita Rose, who owns the pig) calling out to her pet, who she claims is gallivanting. She has kept the warm slop ready for him and so she gives him his quotidian piggy yell –*Ye ye ye!*

RR: *Ye ye ye ye, ye ye ye, Ye ye ye ye  
khuim gelo kai dukurlo  
Dhonn tapon dovorlam, heddonk gela astolo  
Ye ye ye ye, Ye ye ye ye*

(Verdes 52)

In the second stanza, she grumbles about the fact that her neighbour's sow is the cause for his waywardness. She accuses the neighbour (Alfred Rose) for letting his *leitão* (young sow) go loose and tempt her *dukor* to be naughty and wild. On the other hand, the male neighbour (Alfred Rose) is looking out for his *leitão* and finds out that his neighbour's pig is happily prancing with his sow. The neighbours have an amusing altercation through this interactive duet. Both accuse each other's pet for spoiling their own. The lady claims that her pig is a spoilt brat and now she would rather butcher him and make sorpotel. The man claims that his sow is pregnant and cannot touch her till she delivers. Immediately the lady demands two sucklings for her for it was due to her pig's effort of sowing his wild oats that the sow was impregnated. The man claims that there is no evidence that the same pig could be credited to be the father. The pig couple is seen happily romancing in the backyard and the human couple too gets inspired and make a move to get afresh. The animals serve as an eye opener to the quarrelling neighbours that animosity leads us towards darkness and despair; it is time to give love and share happy times together. And so, the couple get cosy, just like their pets. The romance between animals and birds blissfully copulating is drawn in the following lines:

AR: *Kombi ani kombo mog kortat porsant bhonvon,  
Sunnem ani kolgem mog kortat pattlean  
dhanvon,*

*Dukor ani leitany mog kortat, dogum elunch  
chiklant lavon, lor tum ani hanv*

**RR:** Shut up you fool!

**AR:** *Mog kor'ta bokavant ravon*

(Verdes 53)

The man argues how animals co-exist and melt all hatred and happily make love with their partners. Likewise, he urges the lady neighbour to be happy and spend pleasant moments with him in the *balcão* (a cosy sit-out in an ancestral Goan heritage house). The song beckons a positive message to 'make love, not war', but at a sub-textual level, one can see how the *dukor-leitão* amity brings in the idea that pig-farming is a traditional occupation among Goans, both for personal consumption of pork as well as occasionally, for commercial reasons.

#### 8.2.4 Horticulture and Floriculture

The art or practice of cultivating garden vegetables and fruits for personal consumption and occasionally for commercial purpose is the simplest understanding of the term 'horticulture'. In the broad spectrum of horticultural practices in Goa, Goan farmers cultivate fruit crops such as mango, jackfruit, chickoo, cashew, custard apple, wax apple, water melon, papaya and coconut. Radish, red spinach, varied local varieties of spinach, ridge gourd, snake gourd, bottle gourd, onions, sweet potato, ginger and pepper are a few of the vegetables and spices which are cultivated in Goa. Likewise, flowers like abolim (firecracker flower), *xivtims* (chrysanthemums), *mogrim*, *surgam*, *rozam* (marigold), *gulab* (roses) and several other local varieties of flowers and sell them (as garlands or loose) for religious and cultural occasions like feasts, *zatras*, *poojas*, *padwa* etc. Thus, vegetables, fruits and flowers are cultivated by Goans and this forms a part of horticulture which includes the cultivation of all three. Thus, fruit farming, vegetable cultivation and flower farming are traditional occupations under the broad arena of traditional farming.

Alfred Rose was well aware that for Goans living in villages, horticulture and floriculture was a source of sustenance and joy. He was convinced that Goans were people who loved to grow and harvest fruits, vegetables and flowers. In his lyrics, there are several examples of this green passion displayed by the Goans. In "Beautiful Goa", Alfred Rose sings a eulogy in praise of Goa's landscape and beauty. Using expressions like 'Star of the Orient' (*noketr udentiche*) and Golden Goa (*bhangarachem Gōy*), Rose goes on to describe the flora and greenery of the State.

*Goa bhorlam denneamni,  
Ambe ponnos maddamni,  
Kazu zhaddam ani sobit fulamni,  
Roste ghoram xetamni,  
Igorz, templam porsamni,  
Roma xar mhunnlam zannaramni*

(Verdes 19)

In the above lines, there is a mention of the varied fruit trees cultivated in Goa. Mango, jackfruit, coconut, cashew and varied kinds of flowers are grown here. The houses in the villages are flanked by verdant emerald fields. The temples and churches peek out from the beautiful green orchards and vegetable gardens. No doubt, pedantic minds call it the Rome of the East.

In "Bottatteanchim Bhaji", the plight of a young lady vegetable vendor is discussed in first person. The lass who sings this song, sells potatoes in the Mapusa market. Here 'potatoes' become symbolic of the local vegetables which the horticulturists produce and sell in the city markets in Goa. Sweet potatoes were regularly produced in Goan villages by the local village farmers.

*Hanv mathear pantli gheun vikunk bhonvtam bottatte,  
Mhojea jhetak polleun pattlean mhojea lagtat tornatte,  
Thodde yede motte-motte, thodde barik burantte,  
Ani thodde tanche modle saiba bebde surantte*

(Verdes 26)

The vegetable vendors have their own travails at the market

place. They have to face the agony of bargain-hunters, drunkard buyers, eye-teasers and even young studs who desire to flirt with the women. The woman in the song here represents the voice of all village peasant women who sell vegetables in the city markets in Goa.

In the lyrics of "Maltecho Gutt", Alfred Rose highlights the nutritious advantages of consuming vegetables and living a life close to the earth. He recounts the tale of a beggar woman who lost her daughter in an operation while she was being treated for a malignant tumour. She makes an earthen bowl out of that tumour and keeps begging. On one occasion, somebody puts some vegetables in her bowl and suddenly the bowl melts away. This baffling episode is interpreted very sagaciously by Alfred Rose. It is owing to a vegetarian and healthy lifestyle that we can overcome malignancies and fatal illnesses.

*Chintat ixttamni valor bhaje torkariecho,  
Amkam sonvoi vapor korunk nustea-musacho  
Devan sogllem mon'xank rochlam sumbhull korunk  
mon'xancho,  
Bhaji khait zalear meuta adhar zaiteach vokhdancho*

(Verdes 75)

Consumption of organic home-grown vegetables is the key to good health. We are so accustomed to fish and meats that we forget that our own garden-fresh vegetables are the elixir to our sound health. They sustain us with loaded nutrients and vitamins. God has created us to preserve our lives in a healthy manner. Through this song, Alfred Rose celebrates organic vegetables grown in Goa and advocates their consumption.

The song "Zalet Vhodd Gorenkar", is a trio originally sung by Alfred Rose, Jeannet Jones and Rico Rod. The interactive trio is between a lady flower-vendor (JJ), a goldsmith (AR) and a sweet-meat vendor (RR). The two men try to flirt with the pretty looking lady trying to woo her with their respective wares, gold ornaments and sweet *ladoos*. But the lady is relentless and keeps

her virtue. She is a simple flower-vendor in the market and goes by her simplicity and ethics. She wants to sell her flowers for a reasonable rate and so she calls out to the men to buy her fresh flowers on the auspicious Diwali festival for their lovely ladies and sweethearts back home.

*JJ: Hanv fulvali, dista mhonn beauty.  
Amizad asa mhaka, mottea-mottea mon'xanchi,  
Aiz babamni, amchi Diwali,  
Dekhun nhesleam hanv aiz tambddelich saddi,  
Baba lok gheyai, cholieank vhoron diyai,  
Fulam viktam hanv ekdom' sovai*

(Fernandes 46)

The flower vendors of Rose's times were mainly women. This pretty looking *fulvali* (flower seller) is mistaken to be a spinster by the two men who attempt to paw her. However, in the last stanza they are heartbroken to learn that she is a married woman. So together, the two men lament their ill-fate and sing *Noxib hem amchem Deva Rama Rama*. "Kellivali ani Sontravala" is an interactive duet originally sung by Alfred and Rita Rose, enacting the two characters of the banana seller (Rita Rose) and the seller of oranges (Alfred Rose). The two vendors are sitting close to each other at the Mapusa marketplace and develop an amity over a period of time.

*RR: Hanv kellivali kellim viktam,  
Mhapxeam bazarant hanv bostam,  
Giraik zatoch hanv khuxen astam,  
Ankvar chole yetoch bexttinch loztam.*

*AR: Hanv santravala sontram vinktam,  
sodanch Mhapxeam bazaranthanv bostam,  
Sontram khoptoch hanv khoxen astam,  
Cheddvam yetoch hanv ekdom' nachtam*

(Verdes 112-3)

One notices that Alfred Rose, who grew in the village of Aldona, is using the familiar space of the Mapusa market for all the

farmers from the neighbouring villages of Bardez and Pernem to sell their horticultural produce. The man who sells oranges and the woman who sells bananas have an altercation over their space in the market. He alleges that she is occupying her space and in return she has to offer him plantains for free. She on the other hand, claims that it is a space allotted by the Government officials and he cannot dictate terms to her. The interactive duet indeed gets amusing and full of fruits and fun. What gets reinforced through songs like these is that local farmers from the villages would go to the weekly markets in the cities and sell their horticultural produce and make their living. The *kellivali* and *sontravala* resolve their differences and become friends for life. The man proposes to the lady (who is wearing a fresh braid of jasmine), and this becomes the memorable 'happy ending' to this duet. The last lines sung by the *sontravala* are significant.

AR: *Tunvem matheak mauleat kolle,*  
*Mhojea kallzant ful'le kolle,*  
*Zhogddim korun prem' jikhлом,*  
*Veginch login zatolom,*  
*Sontravalo kitlo huxear polle*  
(Verdes 113)

The Goan farmers may seem like simpletons, but they were and have always been street smart. In the last line, the *sontravalo* boasts of being street smart. They would know when and how to cultivate, when and where to sell and ensured that they made their profits in the city markets. They never showed any trace of dishonesty or fraudulence. The two fruit vendors who ultimately befriend as companions for life in "Kellivali ani Sontravalo" only show how horticulture was a lifeline to make a decent living in the traditional life of a Goan.

### 8.3 Other Occupations

Alfred Rose's lyrics make a mention of several other occupations, which were traditional occupations of his times. For instance, he celebrates the skill of the village tailor (*dorji*) or

seamstress in his popular classic “Tin Bolladik Hatiaram”. Goans have always been very popular as tailors and dressmakers, not just in Goa, but also in Bombay where Alfred Rose lived most of his years. He pays a tribute through this song to the Goan tailors, particularly in Bombay, who made a name for themselves with just three remarkable tools: needle, thread and scissors (*sui, sut ani kator*). “Tin Bolladik Hatiaram” begins with how the tailors have contributed a great deal with just the three tools of their service and their inimitable skills.

*Tim bolladik hatiaram uzar kortat ganvamni  
Tanche udexim man zoddla zaitea Gøykaramni...  
Ti sui-sut ani kator, ekvottan dakhoitat pavor,  
Kator katorta, sui xinvta sut ghalun bhitor,  
Ek ek dorji dakhoita aplie articho valor  
Ti sui-sut ani kator, nhesoita amkam angbhor,  
Punn tio nosttio modi sonvsarache bhitor  
Xinvta toch to dorji, gheun sui-sut kator...*

(Fernandes 03)

In Rose's childhood days spent in the village of Aldona, he had seen how the village tailor would come to the house and stitch the clothes for the entire family over a couple of days. There were also instances where the measurements were provided and the village tailor or seamstress would stitch at their own homes and the customer would have to collect the clothes on a specific day. Alfred Rose in the above song, eulogises the skills of the tailor and indicates how he/she is an artist in his/her own right. Notice how he values the artistic efforts of the tailor: *Ek ek dorji dakhoita aplie articho valor*. In the third stanza of this song, Rose mentions how the tailors of Goa came in and settled in Grant Road Bombay and grew steadily in their business as tailors. They established themselves as able professionals without material greed but only with a sincere zeal to grow in their skill with just three significant tools: *sui-sut ani kator* (needle-thread and scissors). That is how the song gets its title--- “Tin Bolladik Hatiaram” (Three powerful tools).

In the lyrics of “Pain Korunk Nam Poi Tem”, Alfred Rose pays a tribute to his father who grew up as a horticulturist working in the fields and watering the vegetable gardens with traditional mechanisms. He goes on to tell his listeners that we should go way above the achievements of our parents and attempt to climb higher as there are occupations which can take our parent's traditional occupations to newer heights.

*Pai fitter, amim putamni Engineer zaunk vanrom-ia  
Pai dorji, tench dorjeponn vanldounk fudden vorom-ia  
Pai bebdo, tache von vhoddle bebde zaunche nhoi  
sudhrom-ia,  
Pain amchea korunk nam tem ami korun dakhoun-ia*  
(Verdes 163)

If the father is a fitter by profession, the son should aspire to be an engineer. Likewise, the child should feel inspired to carry on the traditional occupation of a tailor (*dorji*) father. However, negative habits and practises like alcoholism should always be eschewed and disdained by gen-next; in fact, they have to prove themselves better than their fathers and forefathers, owing to better educational opportunities and other exposures to media and communication. Alfred Rose hereby gives a positive message to the youth to either carry on the traditional occupations of their parents, or to be better than them in the pursuit of excellence in one's career.

“Zalet Vhodd Gorenkar” (discussed earlier) is a trio between a female flower-vendor, a goldsmith and a sweet-meat vendor. It is interesting to see how the tradition of making gold ornaments by the *xett* or goldsmith of the village, was a tradition which was handed down by the father to the son. Notice the following lines:

*JJ: Tum cholo xetticho,*

*AR: Vhoi royal katicho, hai hai Sundori ghetam beiж  
hatancho....*

*AR: Oh polle nari, sorpolli ghe mhoji,  
Fukott ditam poi deddki naka tuji*

Somehow, it was a well-known fact that the goldsmith community was of fair complexion and seemed 'royal' in some sense. That is why Alfred Rose calls the *xett*, '*royal katicho*' (of royal or by implication, a fair complexion). The goldsmith tradition was handed over to the next generation with a lot of religious and cultural fervour. There was also the stereotype the *xett* being a hoarder of riches and a swindler of the poor, which is being reinforced by the expression sung by the *fulvali* here: *Sambhav Narann xetti, kaddin tujio kati*. (Beware of the goldsmith who is known to peel your hide till the last straw).

In the same song, the sweet-meat vendor (played by Rico Rod) too represents the traditional occupation of the *khajekars* or sweet-meat vendors who sell sweets like *ladoos*, *kaddio-bodio* and other delicacies for feasts and fests. He brings to mind a waning traditional occupation of the *khajekars* whose skills are most sought for traditional occasions like Hindu weddings (to make *ladoos* and other sweets) or for Diwali and other festive events.

There are several songs dedicated by Alfred Rose to the sacrifices of Doctors and Nurses and the various sacrifices these ambassadors of the medical fraternity make to ensure that the health of their patients is safeguarded. "Dotor ani Nurse" is a hilarious interactive duet by Alfred and Rita Rose. The nurse falls head over heels for the doctor and wants to become his patient. The doctor too reels under her overwhelming amorous advances and these result in a rib-tickling spectacle through song on the stage. In "Norsichem Fugasav", the discomfort of a nurse in service is expressed in the sombre tune sung by Antonette with lyrics written by Alfred Rose. The nurse in this song feels rejected by the ingratitude of a patient who walks away from the hospital without acknowledging her efforts towards his recovery. However, both the songs talk about professionals in the healthcare sector whose occupations may not be classified as

traditional. Nonetheless, a brief mention of the same is made to show how Alfred Rose uncovers the trials and travails of healthcare workers and professionals through his songs.

Speaking about traditional occupations will never be complete if one fails to mention about the *tiatristi*, of whom Alfred and Rita Rose were prominent representatives. There are so many songs he has dedicated to Konkani stage artists and glorified their skills and contributions through his songs. In "Teg Foler Artinche", Alfred Rose pays a rich tribute to three talented artists: the illustrious writer of Romances Caridade Damacian, the musical maestro Joe Perry and the *tiatr* artist Miguel Rod. In the lyrics of "Captain", sung originally by Rita Rose, the lady singer aspires to marry a Captain of a ship and satiate her wanderlust, not before dismissing the possibility of marrying a *tiatrist* or a doctor. She boasts of how all the male *tiatristi* go head over heels over her and are smitten by her alluring appearance.

*Souza Ferrao aunddeta gondtta. Titta mhaka pottoch nachta,*

*Ani Rico Rod motto mhaka lagun to maim-k mhoje fulam mavta,*

*Alfred Rose Inglezkuch tasta. Seby up-to-date-uch nhesta,*

*Ani yedoso potto Bab Tony mhaka, kuch korn dolle moddtta.*

*Tiatrist nhouro mhaka naka, dotor nhouro saiba naka  
Dogui ratriche vaurak veteole patieunk nezo tamkam.*

(Verdes 28)

With the gumption of a veteran, Alfred Rose confidently pokes fun at his *tiatrist* colleagues and implicitly suggests how fulfilled and amiable the tradition of performing in a *tiatr* can get. He mentions the peculiar qualities of artists like Souza Ferrao, Titta, Rico Rod, Seby, Bab Tony and his own self (Alfred Rose), indicating how variegated the life of a *tiatrist* can get. The singer (Rita Rose) does not want to marry a *tiatrist* or a doctor, the reason being that both these professions have work which

involves late nights. This clearly points out the fact that the profession of being a tiatrist (of which Alfred and Rita Rose were part of) was indeed one which entailed hard work and perseverance. It is interesting to note how Alfred Rose meets his real-life spouse (Rita Rose) on the tiatr stage while he worked with her for Rita's father's tiatr shows in the sixties. The tradition of tiatr brought him closer to music, writing lyrics for his songs, stage direction, script writing and many such creative activities associated with the traditional occupation of tiatr.

Thus, one can observe and closely evaluate Alfred Rose's songs which celebrate varied traditional occupations ranging from butlers to horticulturists, flower-vendors to goldsmiths, *tiatrist*s to healthcare workers, tailors to *khajekars* ---- all who somehow find a dignified space and respectful presence in his song lyrics. They reiterate the love for Goan traditional occupations which Alfred Rose had in his own heart, which he felt needed to be boosted and perpetuated. He always encouraged a sense of pride in one's traditional occupation (however lowly and humble), so that it could be fostered and transmitted to a newer generation in an efficient manner. There was never any shame or embarrassment to feel small about one's occupation, but instead Alfred Rose through his lyrics, encouraged a sense of gratitude and pride in one's own traditional livelihood.





## Alfred Rose's Lyrics: Experimentation with Konkani Language and Dialects

9

The ardent love for his mother-tongue and his passion to take the Konkani language to a higher level was an implicit desire of Alfred Rose. In the chapter on 'Nationalism in Alfred Rose's Lyrics', we have discussed his exuberant love for the Konkani language which manifested itself through several songs in which he expressed it visibly. More than mere patriotism, Alfred Rose's love for Konkani made him to treat the language with versatility, mould it and make it a constructive tool for social change, use it as a creative enterprise and play with the language, making it ornamental and exquisite and even experiment with the dialectical variations he was familiar with, in the context of Goa. In his Konkani solos and duets, Alfred Rose uses the language in multiple ways to enhance its beauty through embellishments of poetic endowments and enhances the realism in his songs by using appropriate dialects with judiciousness.

## 9.1 Experimentation with Konkani Dialects

The man may have spoken in English with his family, but had the Konkani language close to his heart. It was not just the mere language that he used in his lyrics, but also its varied dialects which were incorporated to enhance the cultural specificities as well as the realism of the characters involved.

To initiate a better understanding of the term 'dialect', it would be apt to define the term here. *The Online Merriam-Webster Dictionary* defines the term 'dialect' as 'a regional variety of language distinguished by features of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation from other regional varieties and constituting together with them a single language'. In simple words, a dialect or *boli* (in Konkani) is a region-specific variety of a specific language (in this context, Konkani) spoken by a specific community. It has a distinct vocabulary, pronunciation of words, syntax and even the usage of words.

In Antonio Pereira's *The Makers of Konkani Literature* (1982), the author makes a reference to the writings of Dr. José Pereira, who credits the several dialects of the Konkani language spoken in several Indian regions. In José Pereira's *Literary Konkani--- A Brief History* (1992), the detailed history of the several Konkani dialects is documented.

Konkani Language had an era of progress and was unified for a century and half. Without the protection of the Government which started a real persecution of it, well described in the "Ensaio Histórico da Lingua Concani", by Cunha Rivara...the language broke into different dialects which are the language's strength and weakness at the same time(...) Konkani's dialects--- Saxtti, Karwari, Kodialli, Kerali, Barhdexi, Mangluri and Antruzi (Pereira 207).

The versatile studies of Dr. José Pereira at this juncture are extremely useful to note that the Konkani language has

historically seen a dialectical enrichment over a period of time. There are historical, cultural and political reasons for this. However, mindful of the context of Alfred Rose's lyrics, it will be pertinent at this juncture to see which dialects he used in his songs. As mentioned by Dr. José Pereira, the several dialects (seven to be precise, though more may be added) were the prominent dialects known to researchers during the sixties and seventies. Alfred Rose wrote in mainly the Bardezi and Antrozi dialects. However, a few songs use *Konklish* (a Konkani language laced with English words and a heavy Anglicized accent) and are extremely effective to bring out the impact of English culture and language on Goans who have lived in the West.

### 9.1.1 The Bardezi Dialect

Being a passionate Aldoncar, it was but natural that Alfred Rose was close to the Bardezi dialect of Konkani. Therefore, most of his songs use the Bardezi dialect. Serious songs sung on specific occasions can be cited here as examples. A close look at "Gelem Baba Gelem" written to celebrate the coming of a fresh new year, is a quintessential example of a song written in a pure Bardezi dialect.

*Gelem baba gelem, khuoincheanuch gelem,  
Tornem aslem pornem zaun gelem,  
Amche moden ravon, zaitench tannem kelem,  
vaitt-borem hangach soddun gelem.*

*hai hai hai hai,  
chintun kallzak hea podditat zavu,  
Vetoelem mhunnon, pattim soglreak zal'lo bobau,  
Gopan dovrut ami tacho kel'lo sambhau...*

(Verdes 63)

This dialect, specifically spoken in the villages of the Bardez taluka, uses Konkani with clear words. Notice "gelem" in Bardezi, would be "gel" in the Saxtti dialect. The vowel sounds

are distinctly clear in the Bardezi Konkani and the words are lengthened till the last syllable sound. Also, the 'kh' sound as in "khuicheanuch" would have been "hu" as in "huicheanuch" in the Saxtti dialect. Words like "amche-tumche" become "amge-tumge" in Saxtti, thus showing how dialectically varied the Konkani language becomes. Alfred Rose's close connection with the Bardezi dialect is seen in most of the solo song lyrics he wrote on serious themes.

In the lyrics of "Novem Voros" we notice the use of the Bardezi dialect. The vowel sounds are articulated with additional stress.

*Novem voros yeta dhanvon,  
Pornem voros veta povon  
Sobai tachi geli bavon  
Kotta kotta veta povon*  
(Fernandes 195)

Words like "yeta-veta", stress on the â (aah) vowel sound. This is typically Bardezi. In Saxti dialect, the vowel sounds get morphed; it is uttered as "yeta-veta", where the â (A) vowel sound is silent. It will be spoken as *iett-vett*. Likewise, words like "Ohem-tohem" and "poi", become "esh-tesh" and "choi" in Saxtti. While the "kh" sound and stress on vowels is a favourite in the Bardezi dialect, the Saxtti dialect uses the "sh" sound too often and substitutes the "kh" sound in Konkani words to the "Sh" or "h" sounds. So "kharem" becomes "harem", and "kitem khatai" becomes "kit hatai". Beyond any doubt, Alfred Rose uses a dialect he is most acquainted with, that is the Bardezi dialect.

The Konkani wedding invitation of Alfred Rose (Dantas 83) mentions that Rita hails from Penha de França in Bardez taluka. However, in a personal interview with the present researcher, Rita Rose clarified that she was raised up in Saligao, Bardez. Being a thorough bred Bardez girl, she surely found the lyrics written for her role in the songs quite comfortable in the Bardezi dialect. One can notice the ease in which she sings in the Bardezi dialect. Songs like "Gagreachem Mana", "Bottatteanchi Bhaji",

“Ankvar Ravtolim” and “Kalliz Ootorichem” among others use the Bardez dialect of Konkani. The mention of *Sukraracho Mhaptraa baazar* in songs such as “Gagreachem Mana” and “Bottatteanchi Bhaji” are also proof that from his native village of Aldona, or from the village of his parents-in-law the Mapusa Friday market was the most convenient weekly market used by the Bardez cars for buying and selling of goods and services. The song lyrics are overflowing with familiar scenes from the Bardez taluka, thus showing the close familiarity with the Bardez culture, dialect of Konkani as well as the ethos of the Bardez Konkani through the Alfred Rosian lyrics.

### 9.1.2 The Antruzi Dialect

Konkani language is one of the twenty-two languages mentioned in 8th schedule of the Indian Constitution. It is also the official language of Goa. Dr. Krishnanand Kamat’s article “The Origins of the Konkani Language” explores the tumultuous history and origin of the centuries old language and how it is spoken in several Indian regions and written in five different scripts viz Devanagri, Roman, Malayalam, Kannada and Perso-Arabic. Antonio Pereira in his book *The Makers of Konkani Literature* (1982) mentions how it was Shenoy Goembab who had pioneered the contribution of Konkani literature, in the Devanagri script and had given a new lease of life to the Antruzi dialect. Pereira asserts: “Antruzi’s greatest writer is Shenoy Goembab who conscientized both Christians and Hindus and spurred them on to develop the language, rich in vocabulary, capable of expressing the sublimest ideas.” (207) The Antruzi dialect is popular mostly in the Ponda taluka and is spoken by all Konkani people irrespective of their religious affiliation. However, it is a generalised notion that it is a popular dialect among the Goan Hindus (or so it was believed during Alfred Rose’s times) and that Rose uses this particular dialect to give voice to the Hindu characters in his songs.

Interestingly, Alfred Rose uses the Antruzi dialect (mostly) in his duets where one or both the characters interact through song. In

addition, one or both the characters are of Hindu culture and hence appropriate words are used to address each other and their parents in the Antruzi Konkani. At this juncture, it would be fitting to give examples from his song lyrics.

In the duet “Bam’nnali Pori” (The Brahmin's daughter), the title itself ushers the Antruzi dialect (Bardezi would make it 'Bam'nnachi choli'). Originally sung by Antonette D'Souza and Alfred Rose, this duet brings to the fore issues related to caste and creed. The supposedly Bramhin girl Savitri, is in love with a boy. They have now decided to disclose about their relationship to the boy's father (*Dadak sang'ia*) and fear that somebody may ruin their relationship before they do so. Being from a typical Hindu cultural background, Savitri sings in Antruzi Konkani. The boy too tries to match her dialect.

*AD: Naka bonglo, naka kottri,  
Zai mhaka tugelea utranchi khatri,*

*AR: Hanv tuzo montri, tum moji sotri  
Ghabronakai Savitri, oh oh oh ghabronakai  
Savitri*

(Verdes 18)

Savitri uses words in Antruzi like *kottri* for quarters or accommodation (*kudd* in Bardezi) and *tugelya* (*tujea* in Bardezi). She is very persuasive and natural in her Antruzi dialect. This dialect connects her to her Brahmin cultural roots.

*AD: Kaibori tugelea utranchi goddsann,  
Dadak tujea asa mat tikhsann,*

*AR: Ghorant hem sodanch kortolem dum'xann,  
Odik bori naka hi mirsang, oh odik bori naka hi  
mirsang*

(Verdes 18).

One notices that Alfred Rose is not able to maintain the consistency in the Antruzi dialect as it does not appear natural to him. The Bardezi style interferes with his lyrics and so he makes

Savitri uses *tugelea* in the first line and *tujea* in the second line mentioned above. However, words like *zhum'ann* (meaning commotion) are characteristically Antruzi, though the lines sung by the boy in this duet are not refined Antruzi, but are laced with Bardezi, thus corroborating the fact that Alfred Rose's natural dialect does emerge from this dialect-concoction.

The love duet "Kallzachem Suknnem" also uses the Antruzi dialect. Here the young Prema is apprehensive about her lover Govind embracing the European culture and forgetting his love for her as he sets to travel to Europe to study Medicine. There is a lot of anxiety in the girl's tone and the boy wishes her the very best. He will live with her delightful memories and compares her beautiful disposition to a peacock feather.

*AD: Gopantlo vetai uddon, sang hem kozem ailem  
ghoddon. Bhagwan bhagwan dis he kaddche  
poddle roddon...X 2 both*

*AR: Ghabronakai Prema tuka soddchonam.  
Europak vetam tujer visor ghalchonam  
(Verdes 107)*

The use of words like *Bhagwan* instead of *Deva* and *ghabronakai* instead of *bhiyenakai* indicate the overt influence of the Antruzi dialect which is befitting in this context where the couple hails from a Hindu cultural context. Notice the choice of words in the latter stanza of the duet:

*AR: Naka, Naka Prema oxem roddnaka,  
Pormesvor, rokhddoch tujea fuddeant haddttolo  
mhaka,*

*AD: Pormexvora boro korun sambhall haka.  
Europi zaum naka, Goykar mhonn sangonk  
loznaka*

*(Verdes 107)*

The pronunciation of the word *Pormesvor* (in Bardezi dialect) to *Pormexvora* (in Antruzi) is noticeable. Also, the worry of getting

culturally white-washed after going to Europe is also typically a concern of the native Hindu Goan who primarily hopes to keep the regional culture sacrosanct. Prema pleads Govind to retain his identity as a Goan and not to follow the trends of European ways. Her authenticity is brought with naturalness by using the Antruzi dialect in these lyrics.

“Chakri Ganvtti Fulanchi” is another interactive duet originally sung by Alfred and Rita Rose who play the role of a newly wed couple. Kamlा's husband Pandu, has to leave for his job to Simla and leave her back home in Goa. She fears that he will fall in love with a local Simla beauty and forget her. With lyrics in the Antruzi dialect, this song uncovers the apprehensions of a new bride who is extremely possessive of her groom.

R: *Simla vетoch mellot tuka bauli mennanchi,  
Attvonn kor Gоyoyeam assa mhounn bhakri  
chun'nanchi,  
Bhakri soddun chakri korxi ganvtti fulanchi,  
Nokre poun bodolxi nodor tujeam dolleanchi.*

A: *Ghabrunaka, ghabrunaka ditam hanv khatri,  
Simla pavtoch rokhddich sotdam borixi kottri,  
Kottri mevtouch Simla pavli Panduchi cheokri,  
Magir dogaim bhonvchem gheuvn ti premachi  
ttokri*

(Verdes 29)

The choice of words in the Antruzi Konkani dialect is interesting. Words like *attvonn* instead of *ugddaas* (remember or don't forget) and *ghabrunaka* instead of *bhiyenaka* (don't be afraid), are part of the Antruzi dialect. Incidentally, there is a mention of *kottri* instead of (meaning quarters) and *prem* (love) instead of *mog*, which is typically Antruzi. However, there are Hindi words like *chokri* and *ttokri* as well as *Bardezi* dialect words like *poun*, *mevtouch*, *nokre* and *tujea*. Therefore, one can see that this song does not embody a refined version of the Antruzi dialect.

“Ago Mhojea Sundorea” is a typical expression of a young Hindu couple Tukaram and Sundorem, who are in love and aspire to tie the knot. Originally sung by Alfred Rose and Antoinette Mendes this song uses a dialect which sounds overtly Antruzi but at the deeper level has several words incorporated from Marathi. The lyrics were written by I. Noronha

AR: *Tujea mogan, kalliz lasta.*  
*Sundorea utor tujem, veginch di go mhaka.*

AM: *Tukaram*

AR: *Ham!*

AM: *Bhiyenaka*

AR: *Nam hanv bhinam*

AM: *Sopnant ravtam tuka*

AR: *Am, ham! Khorem sangta*

AM: *Bappa ani ayi*

AR: *Vah, Vah!*

AM: *Zanvoi kortat tuka*

(Verdes 6)

Though the lyrics of this song are not composed by Alfred Rose, the song is so close to the character of Alfie and only he can do justice to the song. The quick repartee in the interactive duet makes it so free-flowing, natural and Antruzi in tenor and tone. Words such as *Bappa ani ayi* (for *maim ani pai* or *avoi ani hapui*), *login* instead of *kazar* and *mugelem* instead of *mhojem* are typically Antruzi. They bring alive the naturalness of the Hindu culture in the song and add vivacity to the interactive conversation of Sundorem and Tukaram through song. There are words like *bolunaka* (meaning don't speak, *bolu* is a Marathi word for speak) and exclamations such as *Ai, hai!* and *Vah!* inspired by the Marathi influences on the Antruzi dialect of Konkani. It is mentioned by John Gomes (Kokoy) in his book *Tiatr Palkache Khambe* (2010), that the song “Ago Mhojea Sundorea” was adapted as a Hindi *bhavgeet* (love song expressing emotion) and recorded by HMV Records in the year 1950 using assistance from two Hindi playback singers. The song

holds great potential for such adaptations into other regional languages as it is written using the Antruzi style of conversation.

“Empregad Nanvanche” uses a quasi-Antruzi dialect through the voice of Alfred Rose. The singer impersonates Chandu, whose father was Ram Xenkor Pandu, and whose grandfather was a retailer of rice. He now boasts of taking over the lucrative mining business. Using the Konkani laced with Antruzi words, Chandu sings of how the Christian youth prefer to work abroad, but Hindus like him continue to work in Goa and make opportune business with mining related activities.

*Saukar hanv Gøycho, nanv mhojem Chandu,  
Bappa vepari mhozo, Ram Xenkor Pandu,  
Azo mhozo viktalo te suroi tandu,  
Hanv kontrad kortam minacho, vortotam Hindu...*

(Fernandes 24)

The choice of words by the Hindu Chandu is interesting: words like 'Bappa' for father (*Bapui* or *Pai* in the Catholic Bardezi) and 'azo' for grandfather (*xapai* in the Catholic Bardezi) are indicating the use of the Antruzi dialect of Konkani. However, the second and third stanzas have very few traces of the Antruzi. But the message of Hindu-Christian unity is at the core of the song's theme. Though the song is composed by Alfred Rose (a Roman Catholic), there is so much respect shown to the Hindu culture as well as justice is done to the typical dialect used by the Hindu brethren.

One can see how the Bardezi and Antruzi dialects are the two noticeable dialects which are used very often by Alfred Rose in his lyrics. He uses the Bardezi dialect quite naturally, as it comes to any thorough bred Bardezkar. The Antruzi is used by Alfie quite judiciously and resourcefully to blend harmoniously with the theme of the song and the character who will sing the lyrics. The Antruzi dialect is mostly used by the Hindu characters as it suits their personality and cultural disposition, though this cannot be made a blanket generalisation of our times. The songs are a

product of Alfie's times and they mirror the socio-cultural and linguistic peculiarities of his contemporary era.

### 9.1.3 The Saxtti Konkani

The Saxtti dialect of Konkani was seldom used by Alfred Rose in his songs. Spoken fluently in the villages and towns of South Goa, particularly the taluka of Salcette, this variety was not very familiar to Alfred Rose. This was obvious as he was a person who was born and bred in Bardez. However, we cannot ignore the fact that there is a song or two which have traces of the Saxtti Konkani.

The lyrics of the popular trio "Europkar", has an interesting interaction between three characters: Rajaram, a youth who has returned from Europe (played by Alfred Rose), a young girl who was Rajaram's childhood friend (played by Luisa de Saligao) and the girl's father (played by Bab Peter). All three seem to be characters of Hindu Saxtti culture, but over the years have adapted to cultural changes. Though in the initial part of the song Rajaram tries to be pompous and seems to use a Bardezi dialect as a person who has returned from Europe (*Europkar*), in the latter part of the song when the girl's father arrives, the Saxtti dialect surfaces quite markedly.

*BP: Konn, kitem zalem, konn Rajaram Europkar are  
tum kit' somzola*

*Tum mhagel' choliek lognachem utor dita ani  
Europak veta*

*Tum kit' vhoddlo zal' mhonn somzola re  
Hem Kashmir-cho coat and kalsany ghalun kit'  
sozmot tum*

*AR: Hi tugeli choli kaka, punn tuje bhoxen disonam*

*BP: Mhojea bhoxen disonam?*

*AR: Mat tori disonam*

*BP: Ti tagele ayi bhoxen zalia*

*AR: Ayi bhoxen zalia? Mhoji chuk zali*

*BP: Chuk zali mhunntta*

BP: *Tumgel' prem' zomtolo mungo atam*

LS: *Voi bappa*

(Verdes 56)

Rajaram Eropkar had not recognized his childhood friend, but when the father arrives on the scene and speaks his typical Saxtti dialect, he recognises her. In the above excerpt from the song "Europkar", the lines using the Saxtti dialect are italicised for greater emphasis. *Tum kit vhoddlo zal'* (Tum kitem vhoddlo zalai, in Bardezi), uses broken words (*kit-zal*) of the original 'kitem-zalai'. Words like *taagel-magel-tumgel-zal* instead of 'tanche-mhoje-tumcho-zali', show the distinct difference between the spoken Saxtti and the Bardexi dialects. Alfred Rose does not try to assert the superiority of one over the other, but instead celebrates the uniqueness of the Saxtti dialect as being part of the Salcette linguistic heritage. This example clearly proves that Alfred Rose did use the Saxtti dialect of Konkani at relevant junctures in his songs.

#### 9.1.4 The Anglicized Konkani

What happens to a Goan who has learnt Konkani by listening to his/her parents or the butlers and speaks English at home most of the time? Alfred Rose had a similar experience with his own family. He loved Konkani very passionately. However, living most of his life in Mahim-Bombay and in varied countries in the Gulf and Middle East, he had acquired an Anglicized style of speaking Konkani, which in colloquial terms is referred to as *Konklish* (Konkani spoken with an English accent, using borrowed words from English).

This predicament of a Goan who has globe-trotted and still kept the love of the language alive in his/her heart is best expressed in the witty duet "Hanv Konkani Zannam", sung originally by Alfred Rose and Rita Rose. Here, Rita Rose enacts the role of Beatrice who aspires for a role in tiatrs and faces an interview through an interactive duet with the Director (Alfred Rose). The rib-tickling humour which ensues is due to the fact that Beatrice

has forgotten to speak the 'real Konkani' and knows a little from the cooks at home. She has lived in Africa, Gulf and Europe and her foreign influence overpowers the little Konkani that she manages to speak. So, she coins her own Konklish expressions like 'koring try' (I am making an attempt, *kortum* in Konkani means 'making'), which evokes a lot of witty humour among the listeners.

Beatrice boasts of being a crooner who draws the crowds with expressions like "Wow!". She has now come to the theat director soliciting for a role in the popular Konkani plays. But the director ridicules her Anglicized dialect of Konkani as well as her stylish accent while speaking Konkani, which make our language a veritable 'chilly-fry'. He even says that listening to her speaking Konkani with such a ridiculous accent will make the animals go berserk and play *kung-fu* with each other. It will simply be a crazy scene. Beatrice defends herself:

R: *Kitem uloitai, mhaka chavoitai,*  
*Kantar korun* I'll make people cry,  
I'll do loving roles, I'll do fighting roles,  
*Mhaka ek chance diun*, why don't you try

A: Try try try *kitem kor mhunntai* try,  
*Stylish tuji Konkani bai ekdom'* dry.  
*Osli Konknni bhas Gōykar uloit zalear.*  
*Konknnichi, zali chilli fry*

(Verdes 12)

This comical duet evokes a lot of humour by the fact that Beatrice uses her Anglicized dialect. Beatrice's pronunciation of Konkani words is hilarious and entertaining. She pronounces 'uloitai' and 'chavoitai' as *uloithai* and *xavoithai*. The erroneous pronunciation reaches its apogee as she calls the popular Goan manddo as *menddo* (as the Director assumes it to be *menddo* or the human brain) and sings the popular Konkani folk song *Age nari tujea nakantlem noti....*, pronouncing *nari* as *neuri*, evoking laughter as the Director assumes it to be the *Natalanchi neuri* (a crescent

shaped Goan Christmas delicacy). The Anglicised dialect by Beatrice results in clean humour and makes this comic duet a laughter riot due to the use of Konklish (a blended linguistic concoction of Konkani and English). There are noticeable English expressions and lines sung by the lady to suit her foreign background.

Frankly speaking, “Hanv Konkani Zannam” is not intended to satirize or poke fun at the Konkani spoken by those who have lived abroad. But it is to redeem the Konkani language and make it not merely the language spoken by butlers and cooks in the kitchen but a language to be proudly spoken and celebrated in the living rooms where families sit, interact and spend quality time with each other. No doubt, it is a comic song. But it is not to pull down those who speak the language in an Anglicized style. It is written to encourage all those who have settled abroad to speak Konkani and make it an endearing part of their lives. The last two stanzas amplify this fact:

*R:* Why are you angry, I'm very sorry,  
I'll act free, I don't want your money,  
I've asked my daddy, I've asked my mummy,  
(AR: Maim-kui vincharlaim)  
To teach me to speak to me real Konkani.,

*A:* *Africa-k tum Swaili bhass uloitalem,*  
*German-ak tum Germanui uloitalem,*  
*Arabia-k tum Arbi bhas uloitalem,*  
*Konknni koxi visorlem?,*

*R:* *Konknni bhas hanv visronk nam,*  
*To speak I was feeling shy,*  
*Kuznera lagim xikleam, atam hanv koring try,*

*A:* *Aple bhitor Konknni uloitat maim ani pai,*  
*Bhurgeank Inglezint vaddoitat kosli vhoddvikai,*  
*Kuznanatli bhass mhounn ti kuznant dovorchi*  
*nhoi,*  
*Tika salant haddun man diunk zai.... (Verdes13)*

This is one of the finest duets of Alfred Rose with complete entertainment; it educates and entertains. The humour induced by using Anglicized English is *par excellance* and fits very well in the frame of the lyrics. The message, particularly in the last two stanzas is thought-provoking, it injects a strong Konkani nationalism on one hand, and on the other it seeks to redeem the Konkani language from being one used by butlers and chefs in kitchens (*cuzinha*), to one that is used for official and dignified communication in the living room (*sala de visitas*).

It is pertinent to mention at this juncture that Alfred Rose wrote several English songs during his life. Living and performing shows in Bombay (an erstwhile British colony), he had to cater to an audience who spoke and loved English songs. Besides, when he went abroad for his musical performances, he was overwhelmed with requests for English songs. At times, there were Goans who felt nostalgic about their Konkani language. So, Alfred Rose sang in English and then concluded with a Konkani version. For instance, songs like "Mandovi" and "She's a Lady from Goa" are sung in both English and Konkani. He was mindful of the fact that he had to cater to a heterogeneous crowd who loved English or/and Konkani.

## 9.2 Bilingual Songs

The experimental use of two languages is quite prominent in songs with Konkani and English titles. "Hanv Konkani Zannam" can be also seen as a bilingual experiment through song. Likewise, "Come on Sing" has lyrics composed by Alfred Rose, which fuses the Konkani and English languages. This song was a special request for a Hindi movie "Love in Goa", and he sang it in the same movie. It is a unique amalgamation of bilingual nuances and requires the listener to be familiar with the two languages. Bilingual experiments came quite naturally for Alfred Rose who spoke both the languages very fluently with his family and friends. A look at the lyrics of "Come on Sing" will amplify this idea:

Oh, if you make a long face  
*Konnuch lagim sorchonam*  
When you cry, you cry alone,  
*Hoi konn roddcho nam*  
If you sing and smile and laugh  
*Tum eklo ascho nam*  
*Soglle tuka ukhlun dhorit, pattim sorchem nam*

I am yours and you are mine  
Come darling hold me tight  
*Mogan poddon kazar zatat in broad daylight*  
*Eka vorsan kazar no good ghorant korunk fight*  
If you sing a song *kazar* shining ever bright

(Dantas 80)

A close reading of the above lyrics indicates the judicious use of both languages, Konkani and English, in order to bring naturalness to the Goan culture which had been porous to the influence of the English language through exposure to education, media, and literature. Moreover, Goans working, travelling and even settling abroad had ensured the influence of the English language on Rose's contemporary ethos. Konkani was undoubtedly the *main bhas*, the salient *lingua franca* to which the average Goan drew an emotional and cultural connect. However, the overarching presence of English could not be ignored. Therefore, Alfred Rose unwittingly employs a sort of 'Konklishness' to this bilingual experiment. Lines such as *Mogan poddon kazar zatat in broad daylight / Eka vorsan kazar no good ghorant korunk fight*, are a splendid experiment to convey ideas related to serious marital matters by using bilingual wordy layers. It introduces a linguistic variation, makes it natural and free-flowing for a Goan assailed by multiculturalism and *en passant* also injects the lyrics with comic relief.

Another classic example to illustrate the creative experiment of using both English and Konkani is "Lovely Esther". Here, the use

of the two languages in judicious measure makes the song brim with liveliness and pizzazz. The sassy Esther from *Divar* is a ravishing young lady and the young male singer loves her and plans to eventually marry her. He expresses his mind fluently in a bilingual manner, one that is most comfortable and natural to him.

She is a fairy, walking light,  
*Kaim somzonam, kitem zait.*  
*Kallzant bhitor, zalia fight,*  
*Diana-k sodhun, I'll catch Esther very tight*  
I love Esther, lovely Esther.  
I met her at the *Igorjechea festa*

(Dantas 21)

Bilingualism gives the lyrics a freshness of rhythm and a new meaning which enhances the humorous overtones and makes the song brim with vivacity. The above lines clearly show how the creative use of words in both English and Konkani help in multiple ways. The use of bilingual expressions allows in heightening the humour in the lyrics and enables the lyricist to add ornamentation through rhyme. (Notice the words *light-zait-fight-tight* which beautifully rhyme and ameliorate the poetic effects of the lyrics) Moreover, in the last two lines of the above lyrics, 'Esther' rhymes with 'festa'. One could argue that Alfred Rose could have composed this song entirely in English or Konkani. So why use bilingual experiments?

As mentioned earlier, use of the two languages (English and Konkani) which very often plays on the minds and lips of every *niz Gōykar*, were natural and affable to the listeners. Interestingly, Alfred Rose uses such bilingual experiments (particularly of blending Konkani and English in his song-lyrics), mostly in humour-filled songs. Bilingualism becomes his unique panacea through which he injects humour and serves his songs with a dash of liveliness.

There are other songs too. The opening lines of "Beautiful Goa" are bilingual. *Goa Goa beautiful Goa / Sobit sundor amchem*

*Goa*. The use of 'beautiful' as well as 'sobit-sundor' which are synonyms in the two languages may seem repetitious, but is not redundant. They highlight and stress the beauty of our land with added zest. In the lyrics of "Novem Voros", Alfred Rose employs similar bilingual expressions which are semantically synonymous.

Happy New Year Oh Happy New Year

*Cheddum mhunntta: 'You are my dear',*

*Cheddo sangta 'Darling come near'*

*Konn piyeta Rum, konn piyeta beer...*

(Fernandes 196)

Alfred Rose uses English expressions which are used in commonplace parlance. He is creating an atmosphere of a New Year dance where couples mingle and party. It is so natural to use English expressions such as 'You are my dear' and 'Darling come near' as the younger generation prefer to speak in English to their sweethearts. Thus, "Novem Voros" uses English synonyms such as 'New Year', but the two are mutually exclusive in terms of their cultural impact through the song. Seldom do we wish each other in Konkani as *Novea Vorsachim Porbim*, but instead Happy New Year springs quite spontaneously on the lips of every Konkani speaking person. Thus, using a sensible blend of Konkani and English, Alfred Rose makes his lyrics an experiment in bilingualism.

However, Alfred Rose does not merely dabble with Konkani and English. There are interesting variations and experiments with other languages as well. The lyrics of "Poilea Cheddeacho Bautizm" incorporate a Latin litany in this Konkani song for the very first time (Dantas 26). This song was sung by Alfred Rose along with Alegro Roque Theodorio Antao (Star of Arrossim). It was a duo which experimented with the Latin litany and fused it into the song.

*Dogui: Santa, Santa Maria ora ora pro nobis*  
*Santa, Santa Dei Genetrix – ora pro nobis*

FP	<i>Mhunn pou'ia</i>
AR	<i>Bhagivonti Morte – mag mag ame he pasun</i>
	<i>Bhagivonti Devache Mae – mag amche</i>
	<i>pasun...</i>
Dogui	<i>Virgem virgem mae de deus valentos</i>
	<i>Virgem virgem mae de deus ajudar nos</i>
AR	<i>Devachie Devachie Mae, pav tum amkam</i>
	<i>Devachie Devachie Mae, adhar di amkam</i>

(Verdes 31-32)

The use of the Latin language in a song which speaks about the ritual of having a litany as a celebration of the first boy child's Baptism, is significant. The traditional litany dedicated to Mother Mary in Rose's contemporary times, was in Latin. Mindful of its age-old cultural significance, Alfred Rose incorporates it brilliantly in a manner as to offer its Konkani explanation in the latter part of the same lyrics, as seen in the above excerpt. Therefore, we see how Rose does not leave his listeners in the dark, but instead seeks to enlighten them with the Konkani version of the Latin lyrics.

Likewise, the use of Portuguese words in the Konkani lyrics gets his songs Luso-flavoured. Goa being an erstwhile Portuguese colony had four hundred odd years of cultural and political influence of the Portuguese on the land, language and the culture of the people. It is natural therefore that several words from the Portuguese language have permeated in the Konkani vocabulary and over the years have become an organic part of the spoken language. The lyrics of "Bela Bela" use the word *minha* instead of *mhojea*. *Bela-Bela, minha Bela : Mogacho Bhorvanso dila* (Fernandes 69). In the lyrics of "Jimmy ani Jenny" he uses Portuguese words like *beij* (kiss), *abras* (hug). *Abras ani Beij tuka sambhautolim / Tujea mogak hanv ravtolim* (Fernandes 118). In the Konkani version of "Happy go Lucky Man" he uses Portuguese words such as *amigo* (friend) and *fidalgo* (aristocrat/nobleman).

*Chodd hanv dhadoxi sonvsarant, noxibvont ekach*

*utran,  
Soglle amigo, nam konn dusman, nam husko bhonvtam  
jhetan,  
Nam ek khott poiso bolsant, tori vhoddlo man  
ganvant,  
Voir korun man, boddi gheun hatant, fidalgo bhonvtam  
rostean*

(Verdes 100)

There are several other songs where Rose uses Portuguese words quite spontaneously as if they are an organic part of the Konkani language. However, Portuguese is not the only European language that finds its traces in Alfie's lyrics. There's the Spanish language which makes its presence in comical songs such as "Viva La Goa". The singer here claims to be a Spaniard who has come on a visit to Goa. In his English laced with a Spanish accent, the singer (Alfred Rose) celebrates Goa with the Spanish expression *Viva la Goa* (Long live Goa). This is clearly an exultant outpouring from an overwhelmed Spanish visitor to Goa. In fact, the lyrics of "Viva La Goa" have trilingual influence as it incorporates lines from English, Spanish and even Konkani. Expressions like *Gōycho soro* and *Tuje maincho ghov* add the Konkani flavour to the overarching Englishness of the song lyrics, making this a creative and interesting trilingual experiment (Fernandes 204). "Viva La Goa" is sung even today at Church functions, fetes, musicals and several other fun events.

### 9.3 Experiments with Translation

While Alfred Rose wrote several songs in English, there were interesting experiments he undertook with the enterprise of translation. He rendered the same songs into Konkani. So, he would sing a song, for instance, "Angela" in English, and then towards the end, sing the same in Konkani translation. Why were these translations required?

Rita Rose in her interview with the present researcher revealed that tiatr shows were performed ever prior to Goa's liberation in

1961. Many Portuguese nationals would be thrilled to hear English song lyrics. They would specially attend these shows to listen to the English rendition of songs. Of course, the Konkani version remained to sustain its authentic Goa flavour and to appeal to the Konkani lovers in the audience.

The term 'translation' here is not to be understood as a mere transference of words from one language to another, but from a specific cultural context to another. When Alfred Rose wrote a song in English, with his brilliance and creativity, he managed to salvage its meaning and sense while transferring its semantic content and cultural context into Konkani.

Eugene Nida (1974) qualifies two types translation based on the quality. The first he calls Formal Correspondence Equivalence, i.e., a translation which features the form of the source language text that has been mechanically reproduced in the target language text. A simpler way of explaining this would be a word-to-word translation, done mechanically. For example: "She's a Lady from Goa" is translated as *Vhoi, ti choli Gōvchi*. In other words, we can call it a literal translation or Formal Equivalence.

The second type Nida calls Dynamic Equivalence, i.e., a translation in which the message of the original text has been so transported into the target language that the response of the receptors is essentially like that of the original receptors. In this the translator eschews the word-to-word or Formal Correspondence and undertakes a sense-to-sense translation, making the translation dynamic and very organic in the target language. It is so beautiful that the translation looks like the source text/original.

Alfred Rose uses the Nidean Dynamic Equivalence in most of his translated songs. This can be best explained with pertinent examples. A look at the lyrics of "Kampala" in English and Konkani will help us understand this fact better:

*Kampala, Kampala, Kampala  
It's there where I met my Cindrella.*

She wished me good luck  
And my heart she did pluck  
In Kampala, Kampala, Kampala  
(Fernandes 212)

Kampala, Kampala, Kampala  
Thoim mevlem mhaka ek Cindrella,  
Rosroxit dalia, eklench sorga talla,  
Mevlem Kampala, Kampala, Kampala...  
(Verdes 108)

Alfred Rose seldom attempts a word-to-word translation of his songs, but rather sustains and retains the poetic beauty and the contextual sense of the lyrics. In the above example from the song "Kampala" while the first two lines are rendered faithfully, the third Konkani line *Rosroxit dalia, eklench sorga talla* translated as 'she wished me good luck/ and my heart she did pluck' makes for a contextual translation abiding by what Nida calls 'Dynamic equivalence'. Rose himself being the composer and lyrics writer, takes the poetic liberty to tweak the semantics of the lines in order to retain the poetic beauty, rhyme, metrical rhythm and cultural context of the song, whilst translating the same. It is quite interesting to note that "Kampala" was translated into Swahili (with permission from Alfred Rose) and was regularly aired on the local radio in Africa. This information has been provided by Rita Rose to the present researcher.

Most of Rose's songs are not literal or word-for-word translations. He is mindful of the target culture and context of the target language and renders it with judiciousness, wisdom and tact. The translation succeeds in balancing the meaning, sense as well as the culture of the target language and makes the English song stand as an independent entity, though one can first sing the Konkani version and then conclude with its English rendition.

A look at the lyrics of "Lighthouse" and then "Foler" will put these ideas into perspective.

I want to have a light house,  
To lead me through the ocean,  
But if I want a lighthouse,  
I've got to go to sea,  
Sailing in the darkness, full of aspirations,  
Could I ask you darling, to be a lighthouse for me  
(Verdes 122)

*Vhol zai mhaka ek foler,  
Uzvadd dakhounk somdirant.  
Zor zai mhaka eok foler,  
Hanvem vochonk zayem doriant.  
Poitam hanv kallokhant, Ontregachea painnian.  
Zaxi mhojea mannka, uzvadd mhozo jivitant*  
(Verdes 123)

One notices the beauty of the dynamic rendition of the song lyrics from English into Konkani (or vice versa). Though the two songs are mutually exclusive and can be sung separately, they are invariably an inseparable part of each other. The beauty of the last two lines in the above example is remarkable. (Sailing in the darkness, full of aspirations...*Poitam hanv kallokhant, Ontregachea painniant*). This is a quintessential illustration of Nida's Dynamic equivalence where the sense and poetic rhythm supersedes the literal meanings of the lines. One can feel the poetic sensitivity of the song writer as his translations are not word-to-word renditions, but creative, contextual and sensible outpourings of a genius who gives priority to the Nidean Dynamic Equivalence. Incidentally, this song was sung by Alfred Rose for tiatr accompanied by lively dancing.

Alfred Rose's "Mandovi" is another song worthy of discussion in the context of his experiments with translation. Here, he meets a girl named Gloria who is about to commit suicide on the banks of the Mandovi as she is perturbed over not being able to get a proposal as she could not afford a handsome dowry. The young singer proposes to her in English and then in Konkani and sings:

Gloria, Oh Gloria, I love you

Gloria, I want you,  
Gloria, its glory to be with you,  
Mandovi on a sunny day, there I brushed your tears  
away,  
Now I know you are feeling gay, Gloria,  
Gloria...(Dantas 18, Verdes 130)

*Gloria, O Gloria tum mhojem,  
Gloria, ai Gloria mogachem,  
Gloria, amrut mhojea kallzachem  
Xitoll vortoulo to suria  
Tosoch Mandovicho doria  
Sukhi amchem jivit kor'ia  
Gloria... Gloria ah ha ha Gloria...*

(Verdes 130)

A close reading of the above translation from English into Konkani reveals the skill of the artist who moulds and plays with words in a creative manner to retain the sense and context of the song and gives in to a unique mode of employing dynamic equivalence. It is obvious that this song which flows from English into Konkani in one run (though one may sing the two separately too) is meant for a bilingual audience, one who understands both English and Konkani. Alfred Rose sang such songs particularly during his foreign visits so that the Goans settled there would feel the joy of listening to the same song in Konkani as well as English. Perhaps, this is one reason why he eschews literal translations for he was dealing with an audience who could understand the two languages.

The second reason is the fact that he intends to retain the beauty of the rhyme, rhythm, metrical pattern of the verse as well as the cultural and semantic context of the lyrics in the target language. A literal translation would make it very plastic and destroy its organic aesthetic beauty. So, he translates with dynamism. Thus, "Mandovi on a sunny day, there I brushed your tears away, Now I know you are feeling gay, Gloria..." is not literally translated but

adapted to the cultural and situational context of the song and rendered as *Xitoll vortoulo to suria / lozoch Mandor zeha doma / Sukhi amchem jivit kor'ia, Gloria*—

When perfume is transferred from one bottle to another, there is always some fragrance which is lost. Conversely, there is also something new that is achieved in this transference. So also, is the creative enterprise of poetic translation. Unlike prose translation of verse requires the creative artist to juggle with words in a sensible manner and balance them with the subtleties of ornamentation like rhyme, metre and retain the semantic context as well. The translation may look like a new entity altogether. Yet, it remains one that is unique and skilful. All this is relevant to the poetic translations of Alfred Rose.

The creative genius of Alfred Rose's translation reaches a peak in the rendition of "Angela". The singer here professes his ardent love for his beloved Angela. He sings the song in English and then ends it with its adaptation into Konkani.

You are the one under the sun, no I can never forget  
you,  
Just like a star shining afar please tell me how can I  
catch you.  
Oh my dear Angela I'm alone,  
Can I call, call you my own,  
Tell me why, why have you flown,  
I'm in love, come back my dove call me your own.

*Vhoi tum eklench, porzollachem visor ghali nezo tujer.  
Nokhethr koxem uzzvaddachem khoxen bik-bikta  
mollbacher;  
Mogachem Angela, eksurom hanv, vontthacher khevta  
tujem nanv,  
Khuim vetai soddun ho ganv, ye tum mannka.  
vochonaka ye marun dhanv*

(Verdes 9)

Alfred Rose balances the rhyme scheme, metrical pattern of his

melody and adds aesthetic ideas to make his Konkani rendition unique and lively. In the above excerpt from "Angela", the Konkani rendition is a creative version of the English. It embodies Dynamic Equivalence and balances sense, aesthetics and semantics with tact and sagacity. Seen along with the English version, the Konkani rendition looks holistic and complete both inclusively and exclusively. The writer has added words like *ganv*, *marun dhany* in order to rhyme with *nany*. The word 'dove' is replaced with 'mannka' (a gem); the semantics may differ, but the cultural context is faithfully rendered. A dove is a symbol of priceless peace and joy, a gem (manik) is equally priceless and beautiful. The metaphors change from the English to the Konkani cultural context. Yet, this makes for an impressive contextual translation. The beauty of this poetic rendition is so aesthetically sound that the Konkani version stands out as being an organic entity all by itself.

Alfred Rose's experiments with English songs in Konkani translation are indeed worthy of analytical and critical study for students and research scholars of poetic Translation Studies. Since his songs were mostly written for tiatrs staged for his Bombay audience, he felt an ardent need to combine Konkani and English into a delectable blend. His experiments with bilingual songs with occasional sprinkles of Konklish, his trysts and trials with varied dialects of Konkani and his brilliance at giving the average Konkani *cantaram* lover a wide variety of socio-cultural as well as linguistic treasures, makes his lyrics unique and special. They embody a catholic versatility, cater to a global Konkani-loving audience and display a resourceful use of aesthetic, linguistic and cultural sensibility, thus proving how sensitive Alfred Rose was at feeling the pulse of what the Goan loved through Konkani songs. His experiments with language and dialects are not random and wayward quirks done ad hoc, but conscious try-outs of flexing the muscles of a vibrant Konkani language which has an equally vibrant history, heritage and culture.





## Conclusion

10

The deeper one digs a well, the more hope for seeking fresh water springs. A study on Alfred Rose's lyrics has been not just interest-evoking but also one which stimulated fresh insights and perspectives on a talented Konkani lyrics writer and composer of songs. The popularity of Alfred Rose has and will always be an evergreen enterprise. All those who are familiar with his songs, just love them for their own unique reasons. This study has been an enriching exercise to probe deeper into his lyrics in order to uncover fresh perspectives to broaden our understanding of the same. In doing so, we begin to appreciate the genius of Alfred Rose to fathom his legendary talented persona and marvel at his skill at giving us bountiful positive messages and insights through his songs.

### 10.1 Observations of the Study

Alfred Rose has not just given us music and songs to cherish, but meaningful messages and morals through them, to savour and

relish. With a swift and gentle poetic stroke, he has penned lyrics which have given his listeners an opportunity to learn and get entertained at the same time. Each and every song has an overt or covert moral message waiting to be unearthed and lived every day. Family values, love and respect for one's parents and siblings, a strong resentment towards hollow morality and values, repentance, reconciliation and gratitude are only a few of the morals he has strung together through his lyrics. There are many more. There are songs which show Rose's disdain towards gossip and slander; there are others which celebrate his core values of honesty, fidelity and friendship; there are those that show how love and goodness have a special place in our everyday living. The varied values he highlights are not in a preachy tone, but through gentle and dignified language to instil rather than sermonise. As a tritiatrist and song lyricist, Alfred Rose mindfully shouldered a responsibility to be an ambassador of positive morals and values in a society which was being gnawed by corruption, hollow morality, greed, insensitivity, brutality and sin. He writes his songs with the pen of a reformer who wishes to make a difference, if not a change, in the morally depraved society he lived.

Alfred Rose had a spiritual and devotional side to his personality. His god-fearing upbringing coupled with his grooming by the Jesuits and the association with the Dabul church choir had fostered his deep devotion towards the Almighty and the varied saints, particularly St. Anthony of Padua ("Dotorancho Dotor") and "Sant Francis". Several songs reflect his devotional side and pay a rich tribute to the different holy men/women, saints and religious persons who had inspired him greatly. Besides, there were divine songs in praise of God, the Holy Trinity and the Virgin Mother. There were some which could fit well to be used for a requiem service inspired by Biblical verses and the Konkani hymnal *Gaionancho Jhelo*. Songs such as "Mother Teresa" written and sung when she was living, actually predict her sainthood well in advance. This shows the farsightedness of Alfred Rose and his brilliant foresight. Besides this, his

penitential divine songs like "Dhonta Bhogos" and solerim thanksgiving songs such as "Devak Divna Argam" are indicative of his intensely versatile spirituality. His unwavering spirituality and faith in the Almighty and devotion to saints is emblematic of every Goan who lives a God centric life. The devotion of an average Goan to saints like St. Anthony and *Goycha Sab St. Francis*, is undeniable. Alfred Rose's songs make this devotion more palpable and relevant to our spiritually shaken times.

In the songs dedicated to Women, the male-singer is highly respectful towards the women he writes about. There is not a single instance of the singer being dishonourable towards the women he sings about. The mind-set and attitude of the singer is revealed through his dedications through song. Some songs which bear the title of women's names are an assorted lot: some names bear semblance to reality, while others are figments of the writer's imagination. Simply put, some of the names are inspired by women who met Alfie in real life, while most are fictitious in nature. Some parts of the narratives in the songs are partly inspired by real-life incidents. These songs deal with the problems and predicaments of a woman and the trials and tests she has to face in a patriarchal society. Quite a few songs embody humour and wit and are sung with an abundant use of poetry. *Konklish* is used to make it entertaining and affable to the listeners; the speakers/singers belong to a melting pot of cultures. "Lovely Esther" and "Janet ani Linet" are examples of the same.

The sensitivity of Alfred Rose towards women is revealed through his several song lyrics which are dedicated to women. He deals with several misfortunes and trysts related to married women. The tribulations of being a wife and mother are also addressed. Besides, the problems related to dowry in a marriage are tackled with sensitivity sans patriarchal chauvinism. Songs like "Mandovi" and "Buzlet Hozar" show Rose's utter concern for women who are traumatised by senseless patriarchal traditions like dowry. It was his own conviction that he bemoaned the dowry system in his own life and married his

beloved Rita Pais without adhering to any dowry-related traditions. His love and utter respect for women is obvious in songs wherein he deals with several other marriage-related issues like marital fidelity and women stereotyping. While approaching such sensitive issues, Alfred Rose does not censure the woman or the man. His approach is a judicious balance putting the responsibility of a successful marriage on both, the man and the woman. Thus, without any gender bias, Alfred Rose gives the credit of a successful marriage to the mutual understanding, love and respect of the couple.

In a less obvious way, Alfred Rose compliments women for being multi-taskers and praises their ability to manage crisis situations. His songs pay rich tribute to all kinds of women: his own mother and all mothers in "Mhojie Maim" and "Kalchi Koddi", young women with names like Leticia, Bela, Sandra, Celina, Esther and so many others; so also, women from a humble background in songs such as "Chedдум Xetkamteachem", "Gagreachem Mana" and "Bottatteanchi Bhaji".

Alfred Rose also makes a fervent attempt to break stereotypes and prejudiced notions about women: the woman working in the Middle East, the preference for a boy-child, the shame associated with being abandoned by one's spouse or children, widowhood and its stigma --- all this and much more features in his songs. It is dealt with tact and sensitivity. One can observe the love, respect and regard Alfred Rose has for all the women (however maligned) he encountered. In songs like "Vilma", he soldiers the cause for verifying the facts before adding his own two figs to the rumour mills. He can never deride or disrespect any woman (however sinful) with or without a cause. He displays the deep-seated concern of a feminist who champions the emancipation of women from the shackles of patriarchal traditions.

Mindful of the stereotyping of women, he uses his songs as a means to break this pigeon-hole mindset and redeem our thoughts from gender biases. In doing so, he promotes an

egalitarian society where both men and women live harmoniously as equals.

With his wide exposure to the varied countries, climes and continents, Alfred Rose displays multiculturalism through his lyrics. He shows his cultural connections with Africa, European countries, Gulf and Middle East (including Beirut) as well as several places in India and Goa. Songs like "London-cho Mog", "Kampala", "Bahrain-karachem Lisan", "Upkar Nasholo Zalo Fottkiro", "Nhoureancho Balchany", "Khotta Kirwai" among others, bring alive the various global cultures together and make his lyrics enriched with multiple cultures. The culmination of all these songs is seen in the lyrics of "Hany Konkani Zannam", where the girl-singer (Beatrice) in the duet admits to have trotted all around the globe and still tried to keep the Konkani flicker alive in her heart and on her lips. Beatrice here is symbolic of the writer's sub-conscious voice. Alfred Rose himself travelled all around the world but never allowed the love for the Konkani language and ethos to ever attenuate.

It was not merely multiple global cultures which inspired Rose, there were indigenous cultures too. Some cultures were inter-state (other states of India) and intra-state (within the multiple talukas within the State of Goa). Places like Simla in Himachal Pradesh, Madras in Tamil Nadu, Belgaum in Karnataka and of course, Bombay in Maharashtra come alive in his songs. There are various places from Goa: Siolim, Divar, Aldona, Mapusa, Margao, Vasco among several other places in Goa, which make their presence felt in his song lyrics. Therefore, his lyrics celebrate the myriad shades of Goa's culture and geography as well as that of India (in a minuscule way) along with the global multi-faceted cultures.

From celebrating multiculturalism, Alfred Rose draws us to realising that despite diversities and pluralistic cultures, we are all unified into one brotherhood of being Konkani people. Several song lyrics display his unique variety of Konkani nationalism and pride for the language, its people and culture. He

respects his own exposure to multiple national and global cultures, but admits that his heart throbs only for his own land and language. He thus reveals through his song lyrics his utmost patriotism and love for his beloved Goa. Songs like "Beautiful Goa", "Gōyche Hindu ani Christianv", "Hanv Konkani Zannam", "Mandovi", "Dudsagar" and "Dona Paul" are only a few examples of his love and utmost patriotism towards Goa, the Konkani language and people. One can observe his meticulous understanding of the Konkani conundrum due to the Portuguese historical influence, inquisition and the ramification of the language having multiple cultural strains within one singular language. In a culmination of this understanding, he offers us the lyrics of "Ami Soglie Ek", a song which celebrates the diverse strands of the Konkani language, its people and cultures. From Mangalore to Karwar, Vengurla to Malvan, Sawantwadi to Bardez, Salcete to Canacona---there is a riot of Konkani cultures and dialects that he celebrates and acknowledges this variety. He is tolerant and at the same time proud of the cultural diversity of the Konkani language, its history and people. His patriotism and *Gōykarponn* is celebrated in songs like "Gōyche Hindu ani Christianv", "Komnidadink Sobonam" and "Beautiful Goa" among others. The songs he wrote exude his immense love for his Goan roots, passion for the Konkani language (amidst its diversity) and the Konkani peoples who are spread all over India as well as the entire globe. Such patriotism prompted Bishop Ferdinand Fonseca (Bombay) to call Alfred Rose 'the ambassador of Konkani culture' (Personal interview with Rita Rose).

Alfred Rose's lyrics also discuss the consequences of blind faith and superstitions in our daily lives. Songs such as "Acharanchem Vojem" and "Kalchi Kodi" are examples to show how superstitions were rooted in our everyday lives that the writer makes it obvious that they rule our minds and behaviours. Beliefs on varied aspects of Goan culture such as 'evil eye' and 'curses' are also found relevant in Rose's lyrics. Beliefs which suggest that evil begets the evil doer and the retribution of corruption by

cheats, money launderers and black marketers are also prevalent in a few lyrics of Alfred Rose. Thus, it is observed that beliefs and superstitions which affected the lives of the common man find space in the lyrics of Alfred Rose.

Interestingly, several lyrics of Alfred Rose offer a strong impetus to the gradually waning traditional occupations of Goa. His lyrics respectfully acknowledge the contributions of cooks and butlers and all those who contributed to the hospitality industry on ships and also in star hotels in Bombay and all over the world. Rose perceives the traditional occupation of farming as the most fundamental livelihood for the commonplace resident Goan. In songs such as "Cheddam Xetkamteachem", "Vid Xetkamteachem" and "Gagreachem Mana", Alfred Rose celebrates the traditional occupation of the farmer. Through such songs he instils pride of being a farmer who tills the land and becomes a provider of food.

A close reading of the lyrics shows how there is poultry farming and pig farming quite prevalent in the villages of Goa. Farmers also practise horticulture and floriculture. There are songs like "Ojapam" where traces of poultry farming are observed. "Dukor ani Leitão" reveals the presence of pig farming through the creative use of a humorous interactive duet. Smidgens of horticulture and floriculture are observed in lyrics of "Bottatteanchi Bhaji", "Maltecho Gutt", "Zalet Vhodd Gorenkar" and "Kellivali ani Sontravala". All these songs reiterate the love for traditions related to farming, horticulture, poultry, pig-farming and floriculture. One can observe the wide grasp of the writer on such a versatile subject like 'agriculture' portrayed through song lyrics in a lucid and impactful manner.

Alfred Rose's strong grasp on the Konkani language and its varied dialects is seen in almost all his Konkani songs. Being a Bardezcar, he generally uses the Bardezi dialect of Konkani. However, there are songs, particularly duets such as "Bam'nnali Pori", "Kallzachem Suknnem" and "Ago Mhojea Sundorea" among others, which use the Antruzi dialect of Konkani.

Incidentally, Alfred Rose gives this dialect to the Hindu characters of his songs. Such a dialect makes the characters in the song realistic and close to the original with regards to their dialectical specificities. There are instances of songs such as “Europkar” where Alfred Rose makes a splendid attempt to use the Saxtti dialect of Konkani. Besides, he also experiments with the Anglicized Konkani (Konkani spoken with the English accent) in “Hanv Konkani Zannam”. Such a dialect was important to highlight the consequences of emigration of Konkani speakers to foreign countries.

Besides these four dialects, it is observed that Alfred Rose uses Bilingualism in his songs. The songs use two languages (Konkani and English) simultaneously. “Hanv Konkanai Zannam”, “Lovely Esther” and “Novem Voros” are examples of the same. Such bilingualism adds a new zest to the songs and makes them very close to the listeners who speak such a variety of *Konklish* language in their everyday usage.

There are also Rose's brilliant experiments with translation in songs such as “Mandovi”, “She's a Lady from Goa”, “Foler/Lighthouse”, “Angela” and “Kampala” among others. They display his versatility and genius at translating his Konkani songs into English so that the audience who spoke both or any one of the languages, would find it comfortable and convenient. Though he retained the gist of the song in the target language, he would occasionally tweak the lyrics and ensured it was culturally relevant in the respective target language. There are also instances of adaptation from the English popular country songs. The example of Howard's “No Charge” rendered by Rose as “Mhoje Maim” is worthy of mention. Thus, Rose's experiments with dialects, bilingualism, adaptation, and translations his songs, are quite noticeable in his lyrics.

## 10.2 Findings of the Study

The following are the findings of the above study:

- Rose's intention in writing his song lyrics was to educate and entertain his audiences during his times. All his songs have an overtly or covertly delivered moral message.
- His use of songs with moral message(s) is his humble attempt to reform the corrupt and immoral society he lived in.
- The moral messages and positive ideals he promulgates through his song lyrics are evergreen, for all times and people. It is for this reason that his songs are relevant and popular even in our present times and enjoyed by most Konkani audiences in India and all over the world.
- Alfred Rose's devotional and religious songs reiterate the fact that he was a devout and God-fearing man who wished to instil the values of divinity and spiritual benevolence in his audiences. His religious and devotional songs are not meant to Christianize his audiences but rather to increase their faith in God, irrespective of religious affiliation. His intention is to inspire this faith in a generation of his times, a generation who was moving away from God. His songs which are tributes to Mother Teresa and Sant Francis and Sant Anton, focus on their benevolent deeds rather than their religious leanings.
- Alfred Rose is most respectful and dignified in his treatment of women. As a male writer, he treats women with utmost sensitivity and courteousness. This is quite evident in the song lyrics dedicated to women.
- Songs bearing the titles of women's names are inspired partly by real personages. Some of the songs like "Lovely

“Esther”, “Celina” and “Vilma” are instances of names which were familiar to the Rose family. Most others are fictional with incidents inspired partly by real life.

- Alfred Rose's multiculturalism portrayed through his lyrics, reveals his exposure to world cultures in a manner not to diminish, but brighten Konkani language and culture in the conundrum of global cultures. Multiculturalism becomes a foil for him to highlight his own Konkani culture and celebrate it with the zeal and patriotism of a Konkani nationalist. At his core, despite his multiculturalism, he holds his Goan ethos, culture and Konkani language in high esteem and celebrates it through song.
- Rose's Konkani nationalism observed in his lyrics is not jingoistic and frenetically zealous, but one of a sane and balanced mind, whose passions are regulated with an inherent wisdom and foresight. He does not instigate or coerce his audience to be patriotic, but instils in them the love for Konkani culture, language, land and ethos.
- There is a great deal of foresight or farsightedness displayed by Rose in his lyrics. Common examples include the prior prediction of Mother Teresa as a Saint (“Mother Teresa”) and *Goychi Feni* to get national recognition, with GI tag. What ever he desired with an ardent heart, actually comes true over the years.
- Alfred Rose uses song as a powerful medium of social reformation. He attempts to dispel the shadows of superstition and blind beliefs and endeavours to instil a scientific temperament with songs such as “Scientist” and “Acharanchem Vojem”.
- By celebrating traditional occupations through song, Alfred Rose attempts to revive our passion and attention towards waning traditional occupations in Goa. He

aspires to give them a new lease of life and suggests the preservation of traditional skills crafts linked to agriculture, horticulture, cuisine and several others.

- Alfred Rose's experiments with Konkani language and its varied dialects, is not intentioned to assert superiority of one over the other. It is only to celebrate the diverse strands, the linguistic and cultural peculiarities of the Konkani language in several cultural registers. He realises through his lyrics that the lost glory of the Konkani language needs to be reinstated from a stereotyped 'language of cooks and butlers' to a significant language of national prominence. It is owing to Konkani ambassadors such as Alfred Rose and their Konkani nationalism that the Konkani language was included as one of the twenty-two scheduled languages mentioned in the 8th schedule of the Indian Constitution in 1992.
- Alfred Rose lived by what he preached. His position on the value of a girl child as equal to the boy child is seen in his own life when he celebrates joyously the entry of Alria Rose (his third child and only girl) in his own family. His stand on dowry too is very vehement: he valued the woman for her inherent qualities and not for the material wealth she brought. In his own life, he never accepted dowry from his parents-in-law.
- Alfred Rose uses his skill at translation to write the same song in two languages. He wrote this to cater to his bilingual audience, as also to those in Bombay and abroad who could not understand Konkani. Some of his songs as well as their tunes are inspired by contemporary English country classics and popular Western hits.
- Alfred Rose's lyrics use a pleasant tone, dignified and respectful language and bring out myriad themes and values which are relevant to all times, climes and

peoples. They embody human values (much unlike the present-day gross and crass lyrics which are often unpopular and remembered only for their notoriety), are evergreen and ever popular. They have made an indelible mark in the hearts, minds and lips of every Konkani music lover even after so many decades after they were written. They are ever-versatile and embody the genius of this writer who used his song lyrics to make a difference to the world he lived.

- There is an ALFRED ROSE – Fan Group on *Facebook*, initiated by Augusto Morais on 21 Oct. 2009, with a fan following of approximately ten thousand people all over the world, with Edward Verdes as the Administrator. This FB group encourages and celebrates songs, literature, music and anything and everything with a connection to Alfred Rose and his works. In fact, Edward Verdes' blog is the single largest compendium of Alfred Rose's song lyrics and has almost 600+ song lyrics listed in his blog ([edskantaram.blogspot.com](http://edskantaram.blogspot.com)). This blog along with Fr. Joaquim Fernandes' *Gitanjali*, are the two primary texts used for this study. They contain all the lyrics which are used as the primary source for undertaking the present work.
- There are ten volumes of booklets, *Kantaranco Jhelo* (in ten volumes) with Rose's song lyrics written and published by Alfred Rose himself. *Gitanjali* has around 40 songs from these booklets and all the rest are taken from Verdes' blog. Towards the end, the book incorporates songs from *Jezuchem Rogot*. However, unlike *Gitanjali*, Verdes' blog is more accurate, comprehensive and has fewer mistakes. As lyrics available on his blog are accessible to all over the internet, the Rose fans use this blog as a handy reference tool.

- In a personal interview with Rita Rose, it was revealed that Alfred Rose had written a host of English and Konkani songs for varied events ranging from tracts to requests, musical shows to audio records, some of which are still in a hand written form in cumbersome files. They contain his handwritten lyrics, some also carry his signature with date. A few also have the musical scores alongside. These are so far not documented and are waiting to be published and studied by researchers and lovers of Konkani songs.

### 10.3 Hidden Treasures: Prospects for Further Research

In a personal interview with Rita Rose, she affirmed that Alfie had written about four thousand song lyrics in Konkani, and approximately one thousand in English. Besides, there were several others in *Konklish* as well. The endeavour to research for more song titles beyond those published in Verdes' blog and Fernandes' *Gitanjali*, resulted in an investigation into the hand written files of Alfred Rose which contained his original handwritten lyrics, which are so far unpublished. These may be considered the hidden treasures of Alfred Rose waiting to be explored and studied by further researchers.

No.	Title of the song	Date when written	About
1.	“Konkani Bhaxecho Melghor”		The distortions caused to Konkani language.
2.	“Foll Doyallponacho”	18 July 1955	The fruits of compassion.
3.	“Suberbai”	21 Aug. 1956	Pride leads to ones downfall
4.	“Porke Misionar”	21 Aug. 1956	Foreign missionaries

5.	“Amche Purvoz”	10 Jan. 1954	Our hardworking ancestors/forefathers
6.	“Sot tem Sot”	1954	A song celebrating truth.
7.	“Xirap”	1955	Curses
8.	“Imteponn”	1 Mar. 1954	Stingy ways
9.	“Suropai”	2 Aug. 1953	Beauty
10.	“Goa ani Gōykar”	6 Sept. 1953	Goa and Goans
11.	“Mhozo Guneav Zalo”	18 Jan. 1993	A penitential song
12.	“Bunead Soitanachi”		The foundation of Evil
13.	“Sugrat”	5 Mar. 1953	Accumulation of material wealth.
14.	“Invitation Card”	5 Aug. 1952	Wedding timings and the need for the couple to be punctual.
15.	“Bim Toxem Bhat”	21 Aug. 1956	The parents as role models for their children
16.	“Bandpas Ekvottacho”	2 Aug. 1956	The bonds of social unity
17.	“Goribanche Chedde”	7 May 1955	The penury-stricken boys
18.	“Peleacho Mog”	6 Aug. 1955	Love for one's neighbour

19.	“Mhojem Magnem”		One has to do the Bidanha in one's own mother tongue (Konkani)
20.	“Dharevont Hatiar”		The sharp weapon
21.	“Boreponn Famili Bhitor”	21 Aug. 1956	The virtues within a family
22.	“Vepar Dhondo”	1 Apr. 1964	When outsiders have started businesses in Goa, it is up to Goans to start their own.
23.	“Adlim Sotam”	July 1962 (post liberation)	Recounts the Portuguese bygone era
24.	“Vegillechar Igorzamni”	27 Mar. 1961	Decries the distinctions of the Confraria in the house of God.
25.	“Fr. Lyon”	15 Nov. 1960	A tribute to Fr. Lyon.
26.	“Siminar vo Hospital”	27 Oct. 1960	A song from Alfie's own experience.
27.	“Bautto Kristanvancho”		The flag of Christian faith.
28.	“Africachi Viaj/Adeus Africa”		His voyage to Africa
29.	“Don Arxe”	25 May 1994	The two kinds of social reflections
30.	“Futtblachcho Khell”	7 Feb. 1960	Football craze

31.	“Tiatranchem Hall”	1959	If Africa, Karachi and Bombay had theatre halls, why can't Goa have too!
33.	“Mhozo Guneav Zalo”	18 Jan. 1993	Acceptance of one's transgressions.
34.	“Oh Carolina”	29 Oct. 1989	A lively song addressed to an imaginary Carolina.
35.	“Gõyam Vetanam” (Party song)	31 Mar. 1992	The ebullient journey to Goa by bus which got witty with an amalgamation of varied regional cultures of India.
36.	“Sonvsar Computer Zala”	11 Oct. 1991	The impact of IT/computers on the global scenario.
37.	“Rajiv Gandhi”	28 Aug. 1991	A tribute to Rajiv Gandhi
38.	“Cheovis voram”	25 May 1990	The resourceful utility of a day.
39.	“Break Dance”	23 Feb. 1986	A lively song to offer views on dance and music.
40.	“Padriponn Sakrifis”	11 July 1983	The sacrifices of a pastor.
41.	“Testament Korat”	14 Sept. 1982	A song urging to give witness to righteousness.

42. "Tax Choddlo"	1 Mar. 1979	A comic song satirizing the hike in taxation
43. "Maya Mhojem Nanv"	5 Sept. 1978	A song voicing the experiences of a woman
44. "Vaitt Nodren Pollenaka"	29 July 1978	A song about narrow mindedness
45. "Private Kaazar"	14 May 1968	Narrates a quiet private wedding celebration
46. "Avoichi As"	5 Oct. 1960	Sings about a mother's unvoiced desires
47. "Ghatkeak Ghat"	4 Aug. 1965	A betrayer gets betrayed.
48. "Za Mhozo Poti"	24 May 1986	The female singer proposes to her lover.
49. "Sotacho Uzvadd"	23 July 1958	Sings about truth and enlightenment.
50. "Ekuch Utor"	15 May 1999	A single magical word which can make a difference.

## A list of numerous unlisted English Songs by Alfred Rose

The following songs by Alfred Rose are seldom heard and sung. They were titles which were uncovered from his cumbersome files. All handwritten in the fifties, sixties and seventies, these precious gems are waiting to be documented with music and lyrics. Further researchers can take a cue from this list and chalk their plans.

1. "My Heart is on Fire" (27 Nov. 1955)
2. "My Guardian Angel"
3. "Start the Day with a Song"
4. "My Violo"
5. "It's Never too Late to Learn"
6. "Married to the Stage"
7. "In Paris" (8 Aug. 1954)
8. "Little Singer"
9. "Roaming Romeo"
10. "My Conscience my Crown"
11. "Always be True"
12. "A Goan Landlord"
13. "A Jolly Fair"
14. "A Voyage to Aldona" (Jr. Rose, 4 Jul. 1951)
15. "India"
16. "Friendship" (Jr. Rose, 1 July 1950)
17. "Flowers"
18. "Symphony" (15 Oct. 1950)
19. "Artificial Beauty" (6 Jan. 1981)
20. "Death and Sleep"
21. "Christine" (4 June 1964)
22. "Love is Like Cha Cha Cha" (8 Apr. 1961)
23. "Mummy My Dear" (Engelbert, 21 Aug. 1977)
24. "Seagull" (Radio Ceylon, 9 Feb. 1961)
25. "Hallmark of Reputation" (specially composed for the function of the Swiss Trading Corporation held at Taj

Mahal Hotel, 14 Aug. 1960)

26. "Goody Goody Fellow" (1 Dec. 1969)
27. "Going to UK" (12 Aug. 1959)
28. "Woman of Wax" (20 July 1955)
29. "Pussy Lucy" (On His Favourite Cat, 28 July 1956)
30. "Thanks For the Gift" (For Alria, 3 Aug. 1990)
31. "Lady From Goa" (7 Sep. 1991)
32. "Pledge Your Eyes" (Alria, 7 Jan. 1993)
33. "Mother, a Sacrifice" (26 Oct. 1992)
34. "Start The Morning with A Song" (25 Feb. 1956)
35. "I Wanted to Fall In Love" (7 Jan 1956)
36. "My Heart is On Fire" (27 Nov. 1955)
37. "Friendship" (Jr. Rose, 1 July 1950)
38. "Hollywood" (27 July 1952)
39. "My Daddy's Hands" (Margao, 20 Feb 1992)
40. "I'm in Love With A Married Man"
41. "I'm a Happy-Go-Lucky Girl" (1992)
42. "Without You" (Composed specially for his wife, Rita Rose)
43. "Conossa Special School, Mahim" (Composed for a special occasion, 1990)
44. "Gossip Gossip" (2 July 1981)

A close look at these titles indicates how the most simplistic idea ignited a deep thought process and resulted in the genesis of a song. His songs highlight his strong morality and ethics. There is not a single negative idea; everything is overwhelmingly positive and full of optimism. In these twenty titles, one can see how he has displayed all the themes and ideas which have been discussed in this work. Morality and ethical principles are overflowing in "My Conscience my Crown" and "Always be True". His multicultural leanings are voiced in "In Paris". His nationalism is exuberantly expressed in "India". His utmost love and devotion to his Goan identity is evident in "A Voyage to Aldona", "A Goan Landlord" and "A Jolly Fair". The following excerpt from "A Voyage to Aldona" re-creates the nostalgic

beauty, luscious landscape and celebrates the author's village (Aldona) through song.

A voyage to Aldona through river Mandovi  
O Aldona, land of beauty  
In going to Aldona, playing concertina  
Sailing in a boat Harizona  
Penha de Franca is in sight  
What a beautiful sight  
Sail oh sail, O you boys  
In her light!

Alfred Rose's passionate love for his Goan village of Aldona where he was born and raised, is well expressed through this song. Flanked by the Mandovi waters, the village had neighbouring islands like Corjuem, Calvim and Pomburpa (those were the times before the fancy bridges were built), Rose mentions about how the experience of sailing by the ferryboat/canoe, was indeed a glorious experience. Aldona gives him a nostalgic high! He revels in the beauty of the village and much like William Wordsworth the great English poet, he takes on the flight of imagination and writes this song displaying a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.

Rita Rose, while sharing this treasure of songs and their lyrics, mentions in a personal interview to the present researcher:

*We are baffled by the volume and contents of his lyrics which are so relevant today. His thoughts were pure and his deeds kind. He practised what he preached. He was a contented person who saw the good in others, never criticising anyone. He had a keen ear for the simplest things which would become the topic for his lyrics. After he passed away, several people mentioned how he would give a patient ear to their problems and never breathed a word to anyone. He would never pass judgments or hurt anyone. I miss him very much and can never agree to call him 'Late Alfred'. For me, he lives in spirit!*

Truly, Alfred Rose continues to live through his momentous lyrics. The Melody King reigns through his songs and music. Even today, several Konkani *cantaram* contests are incomplete without an Alfred Rose solo or duet. Contests such as Herald *Gōycho Avaz*, *Mhozo Tollo Aikat* and varied Konkani singing competitions invariably have songs from Alfred Rose. The Alfred Rose popularity is a rave not just in Goa but all over the globe. The 9700+ followers on the Alfred Rose Fan Club on Facebook will testify for this worldwide popularity. Not hollow glamour, but genuine fandom! Alfred Rose's lyrics embody evergreen and ever-relevant themes and a passionate quest for filling the Goa-shaped void in every Konkani lover's soul. They are fragrant with Goa and the Goan ethos. Deservedly, Alfred Rose won the Goa State Award (posthumously) in 2004 and is still remembered for his contributions to Konkani language, literature and culture.



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# *The Rose Blooms*

## A Study of Alfred Rose's Lyrics

A comprehensive study of the choicest lyrics of Alfred Rose, this book weaves together several themes explored by the lyricist. They range from social values, morals, devotional and religious themes, nationalism and multiple cultures. The lyrics also explore the waning traditions of Goa and evoke nostalgia. Besides popular lyrics, the work gives a glimpse into the unexplored, unpublished hidden gems of Alfred Rose, both in English and Konkani.

Insightful, elaborate, informative and written with passion, this book is a treasure for readers, researchers and lovers of Konkani literature and culture.



**Glenis Maria Mendonça** works as an Associate Professor in the Department of English at Carmel College of Arts, Science and Commerce for Women, Nuvarim-Goa. She has been teaching for over two decades at the undergraduate level. She has published several research papers in journals of national and international repute. Besides this, she has published research papers in edited books. She completed her Doctorate from Goa University in 2017 on the topic "Konkani Fiction in English Translation: A Critical Study". She has co-authored several books and written book-reviews in online journals such as Museindia.com and Joao Roque Literary Journal. As a part of the Margao Book Club, she has co-authored *Viral Verse -A Lockdown Anthology* (pandemic poetry) published in 2022. Passionate about music, translations, Konkani culture and literature, she writes for *Gulab*, *Zaag* and occasionally for the local newspapers.

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